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ROCKET TYPHOONS



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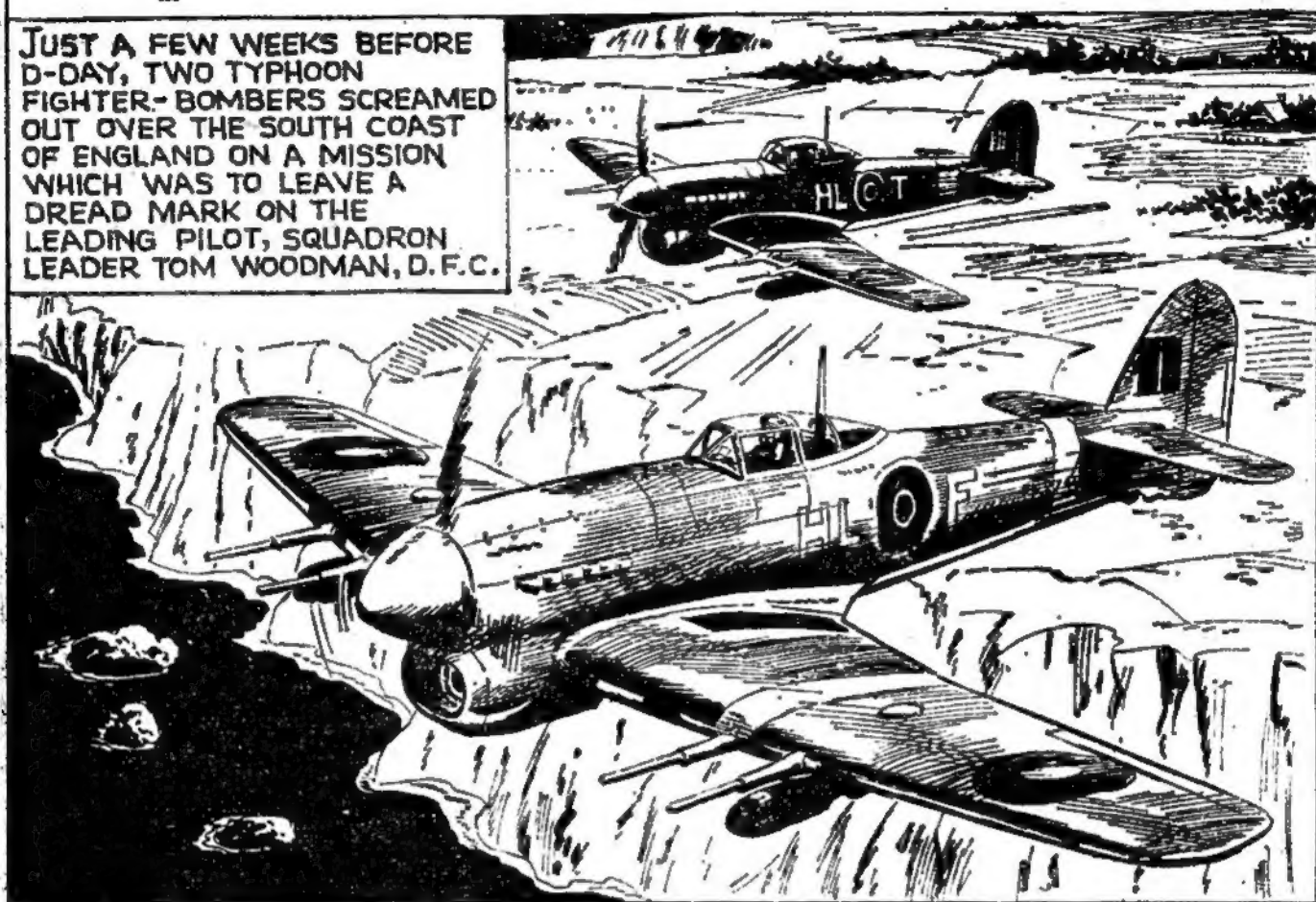
ROCKET TYPHOONS

THIS IS A STORY OF THE HAWKER TYPHOONS, WHOSE FEARSOME ARMAMENT OF EIGHT ROCKET PROJECTILES AND FOUR CANNONS MADE THEIR LOW-LEVEL ATTACKS ON ENEMY TARGETS A DEVASTATING FEATURE OF THE SPECTACULAR "CURTAIN-RAISER" TO THE ALLIED INVASION OF NORMANDY... JUNE 6TH. 1944.



Chapter 1. SKIP-BOMB ATTACK

JUST A FEW WEEKS BEFORE D-DAY, TWO TYPHOON FIGHTER-BOMBERS SCREAMED OUT OVER THE SOUTH COAST OF ENGLAND ON A MISSION WHICH WAS TO LEAVE A DREAD MARK ON THE LEADING PILOT, SQUADRON LEADER TOM WOODMAN, D.F.C.



TOM, OR "TIMBER" WOODMAN, AS HE WAS KNOWN TO HIS FRIENDS, HAD WON HIS DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS NOT FOR ANY SPECTACULAR DEED BUT FOR QUALITIES OF GREAT COURAGE AND LEADERSHIP.

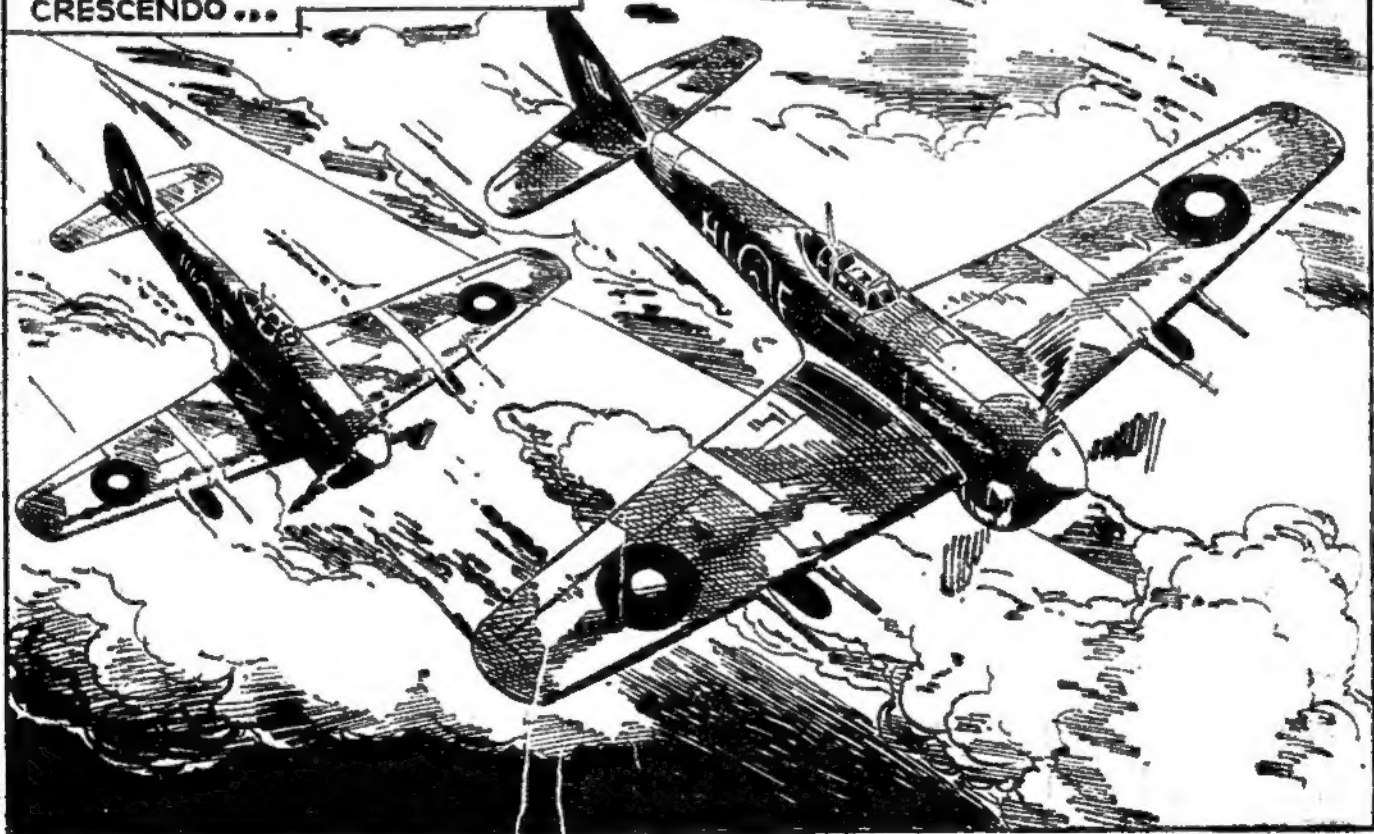
TIMBER HERE, WAGGA... CARGO BOAT BELOW MAKING FOR DIEPPE BY THE LOOKS OF IT... WHAT DO YOU THINK? OVER.



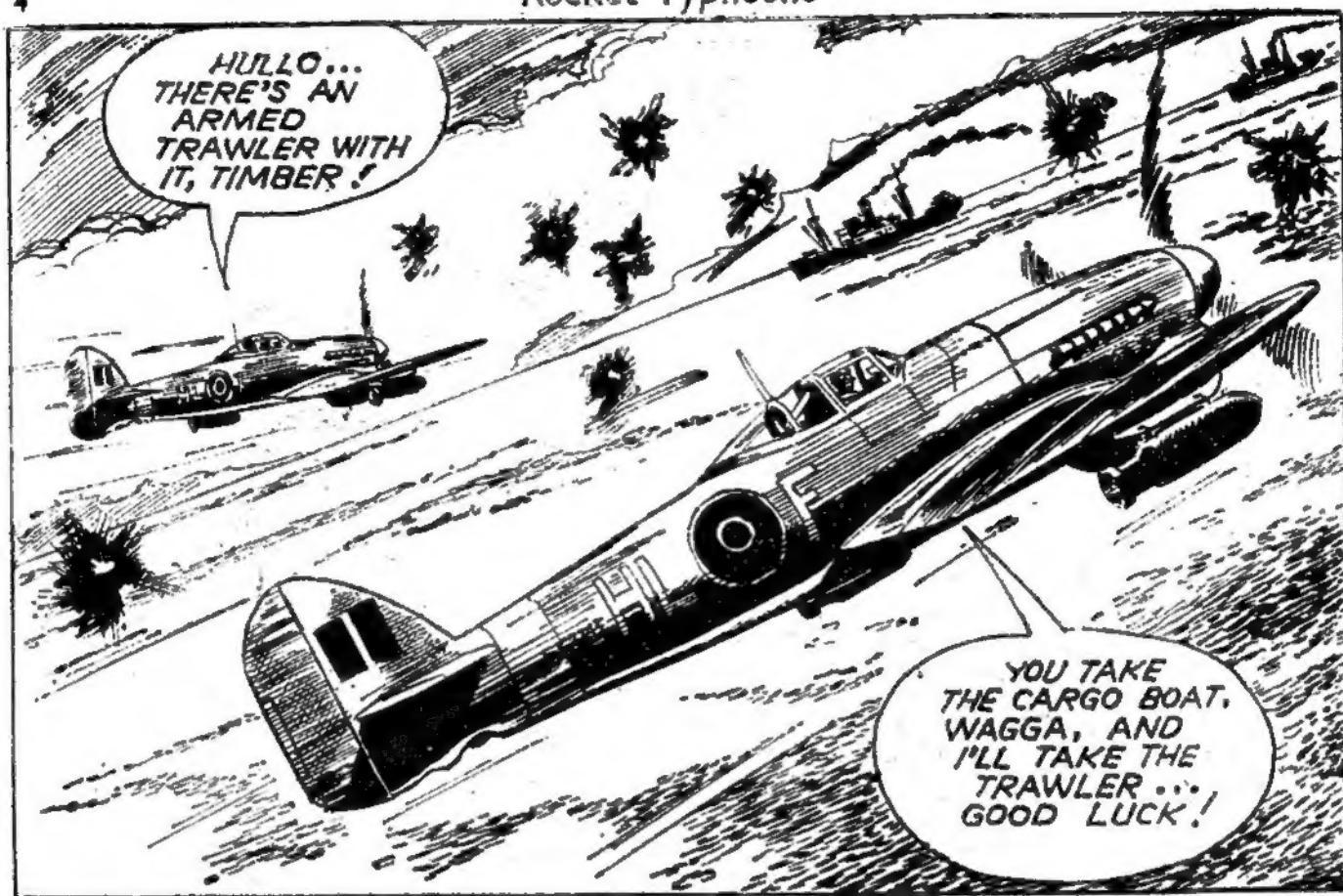
FLIGHT LIEUTENANT DAN
"WAGGA" WAGHORN
REPLIED IN HIS LACONIC
AUSTRALIAN GROWL.

SO LONG
AS WE KILL
THE RAT.
OUT.

TIMBER WOODMAN TILTED
HIS PLANE SEAWARDS AND
THE OTHER TYPHOON FOLLOWED...
THE NOISE OF THEIR ENGINES
RISING TO A SCREAMING
CRESCENDO...



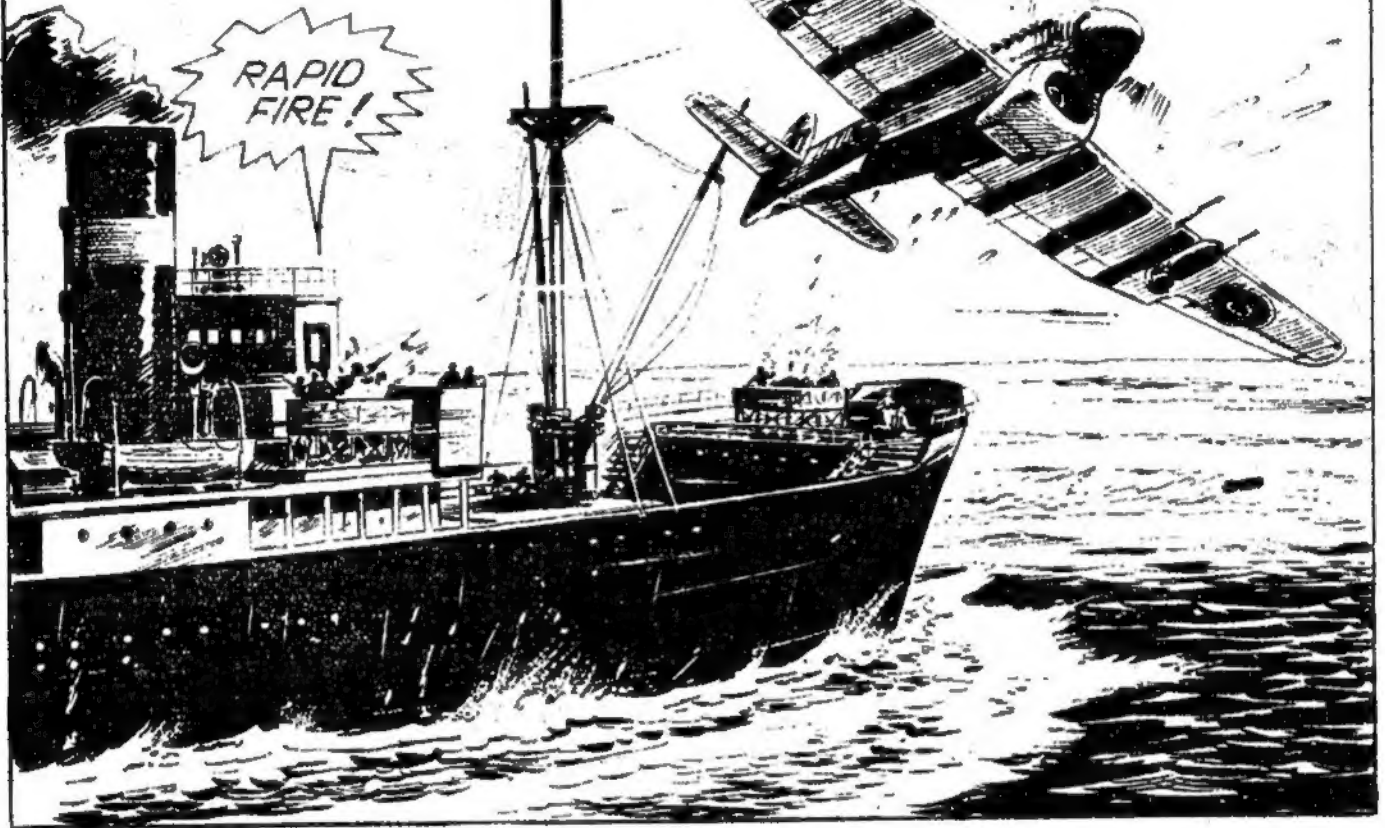
Rocket Typhoons



WITH A TERSE ASSENT THE AUSTRALIAN AIMED HIS PLANE AT THE CARGO BOAT AND SHAPED FOR THE DEADLY SKIP-BOMB STYLE OF ATTACK WHICH THESE PILOTS HAD BROUGHT TO PERFECTION.



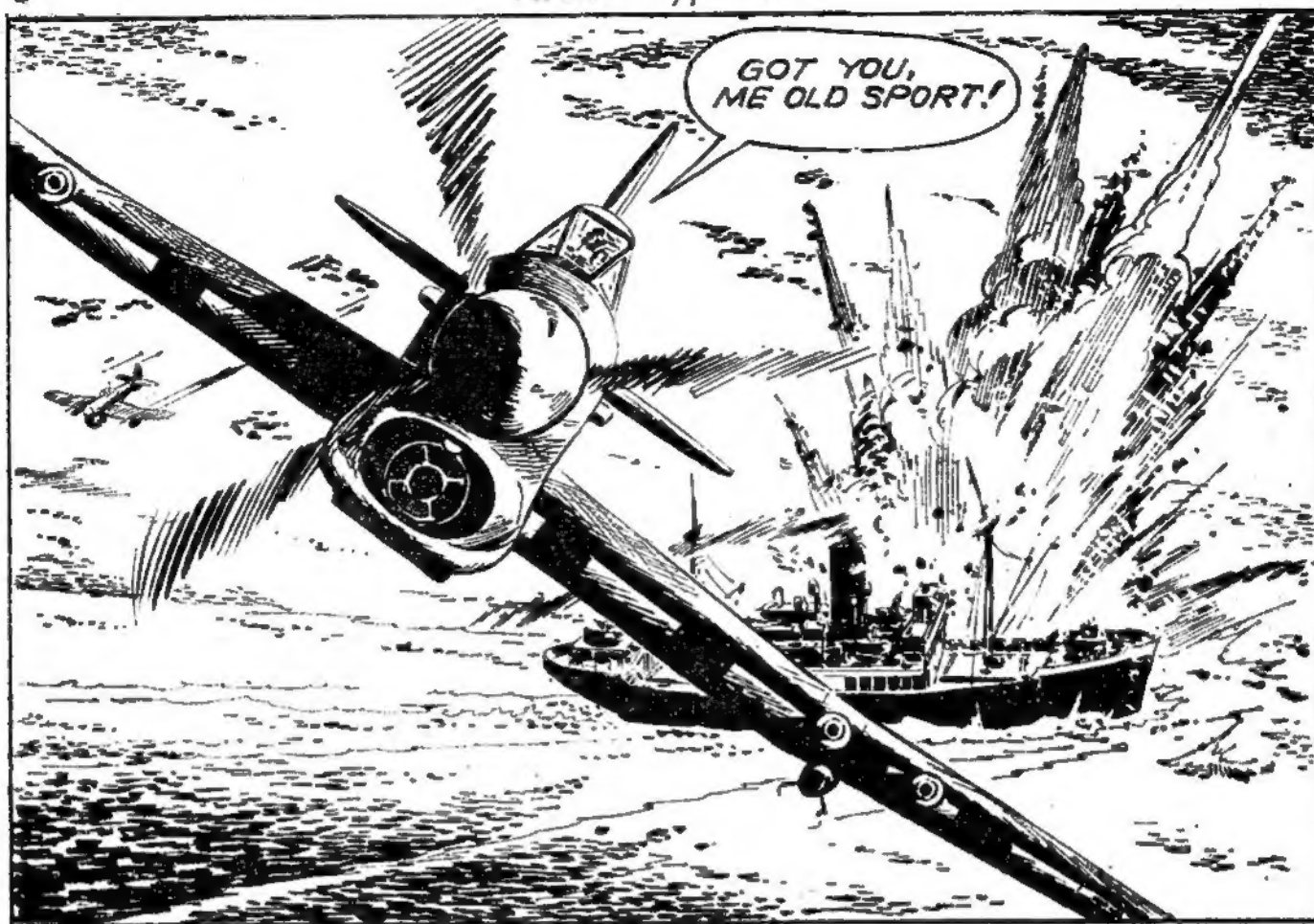
THE SKIP-BOMB TECHNIQUE WAS TO DROP THE BOMB FROM ALMOST SEA LEVEL SO THAT IT BOUNCED OVER THE WATER TOWARDS THE TARGET.



DEFLECTED BY A CHANCE WAVE, WAGGA'S SKIPPING BOMB JUST MISSED THE CARGO BOAT, SO THE AUSTRALIAN WENT IN AGAIN, SCORNING THE CONCENTRATED FIRE.

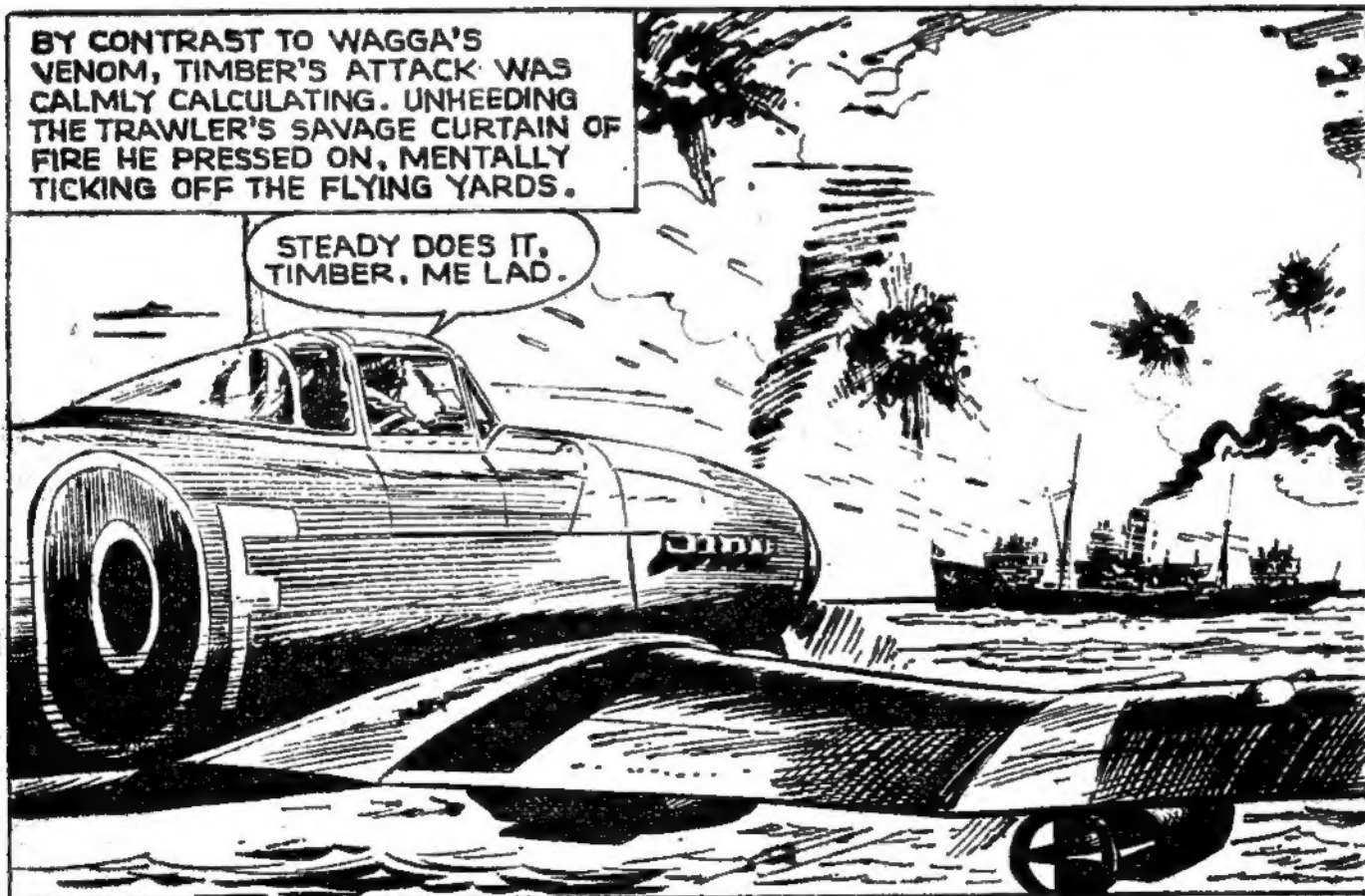
THIS ONE'S GOING HOME IF I HAVE TO TAKE IT ALL THE WAY!





BY CONTRAST TO WAGGA'S VENOM, TIMBER'S ATTACK WAS CALMLY CALCULATING. UNHEEDING THE TRAWLER'S SAVAGE CURTAIN OF FIRE HE PRESSED ON, MENTALLY TICKING OFF THE FLYING YARDS.

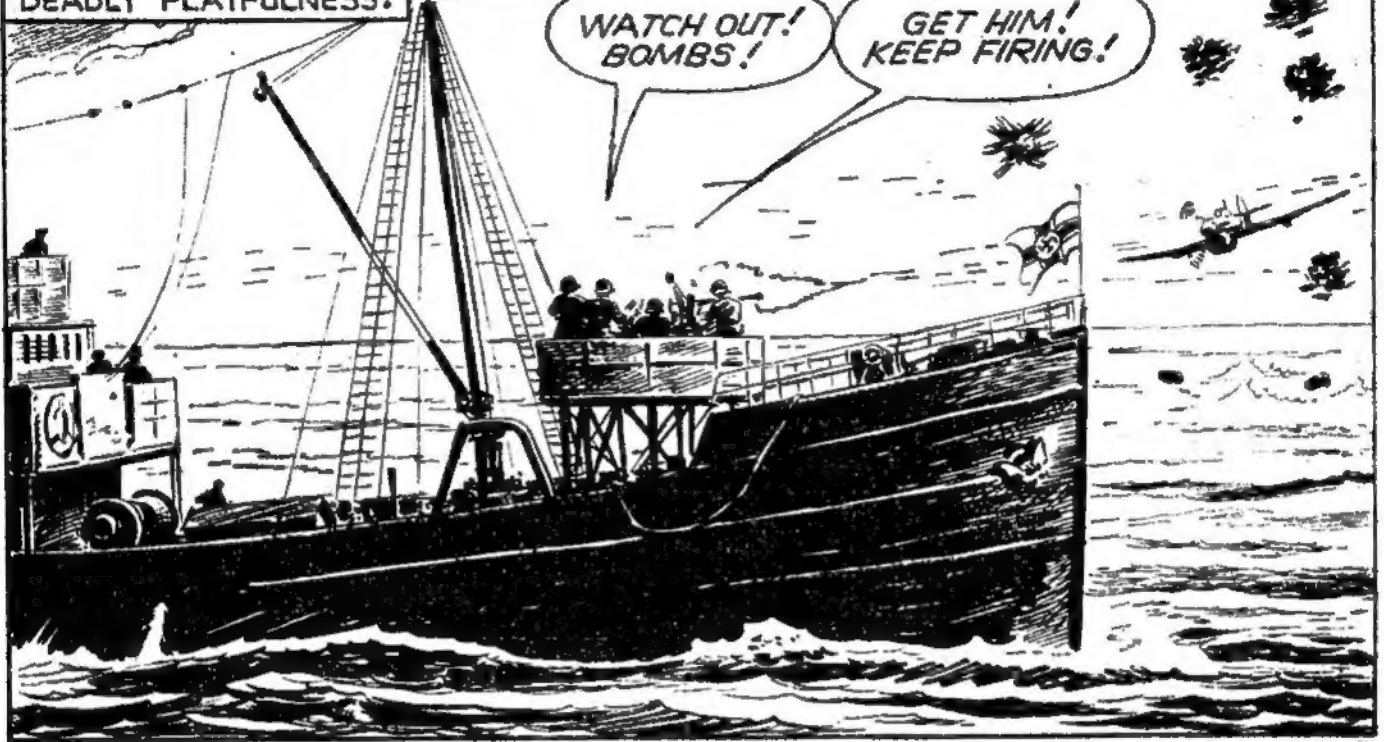
STEADY DOES IT, TIMBER, ME LAD.



THEN TIMBER THUMPED THE BOMB RELEASE AND TWO MURDEROUS 500-POUNDERS CAME SKIPPING TOWARDS THE GERMANS WITH DEADLY PLAYFULNESS.

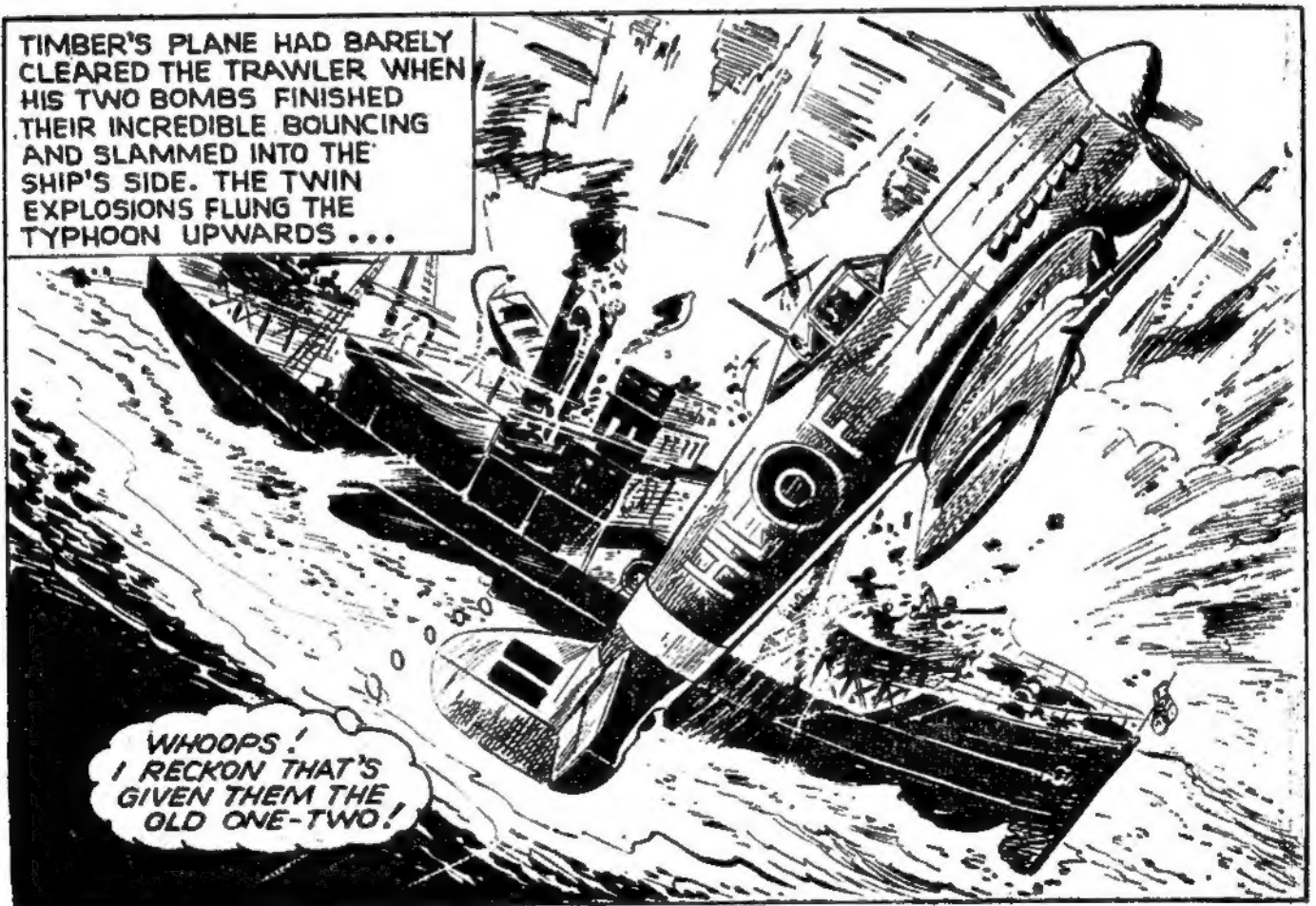
WATCH OUT!
BOMBS!

GET HIM!
KEEP FIRING!



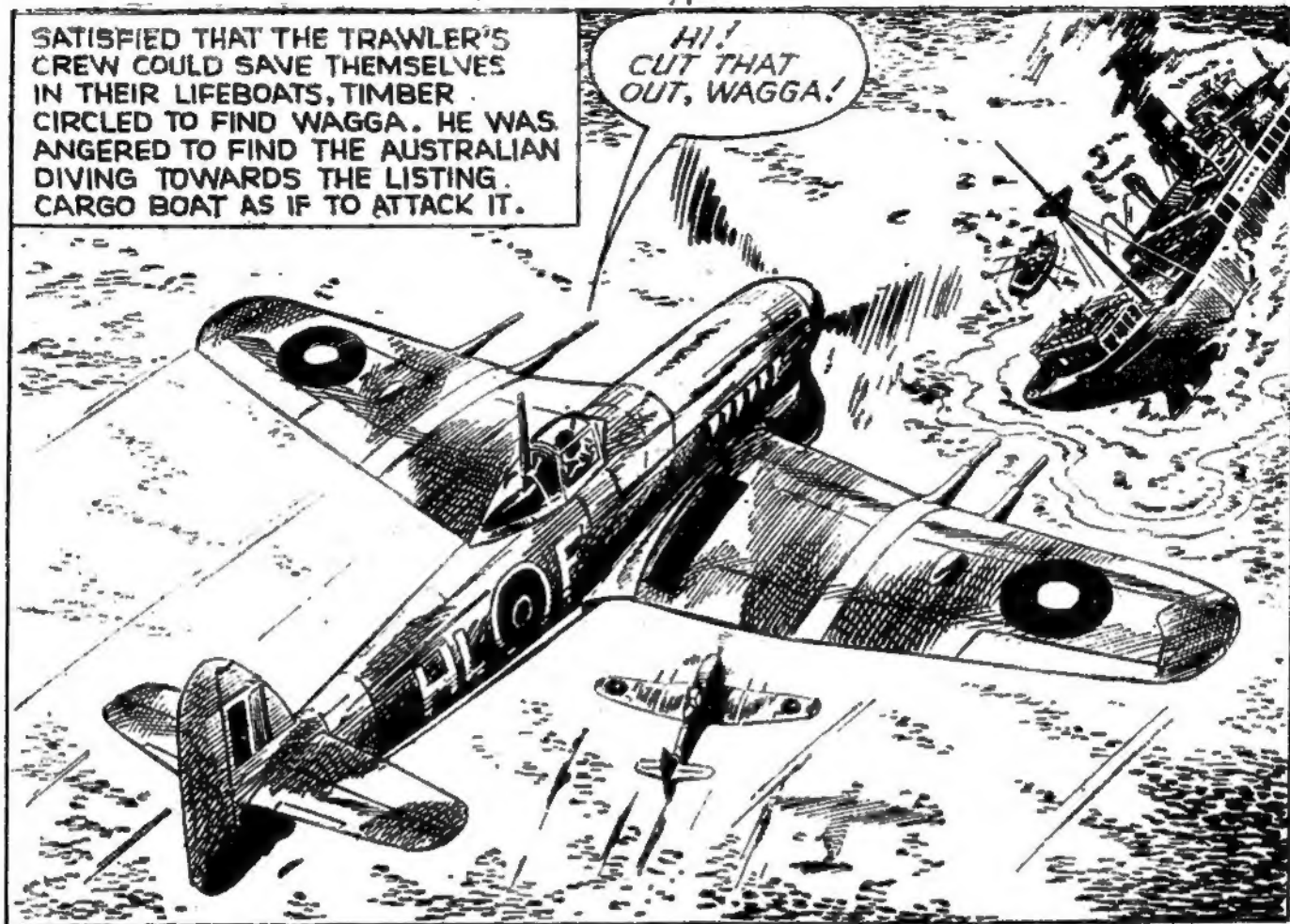
TIMBER'S PLANE HAD BARELY CLEARED THE TRAWLER WHEN HIS TWO BOMBS FINISHED THEIR INCREDIBLE BOUNCING AND SLAMMED INTO THE SHIP'S SIDE. THE TWIN EXPLOSIONS FLUNG THE TYPHOON UPWARDS...

WHOOOPS!
I RECKON THAT'S
GIVEN THEM THE
OLD ONE-TWO!



SATISFIED THAT THE TRAWLER'S CREW COULD SAVE THEMSELVES IN THEIR LIFEBOATS, TIMBER CIRCLED TO FIND WAGGA. HE WAS ANGERED TO FIND THE AUSTRALIAN DIVING TOWARDS THE LISTING CARGO BOAT AS IF TO ATTACK IT.

HI!
CUT THAT
OUT, WAGGA!



TIMBER CIRCLED OVER THE STRICKEN SHIP AND CALLED SHARPLY TO WAGGA ON THE RADIO TELEPHONE.

LAY OFF,
WAGGA! GIVE
THE POOR DEVILS
A CHANCE!

KEEP YOUR
HAIR ON, TIMBER!
I WAS ONLY
SCARING THEM
A LITTLE!



THE AUSTRALIAN TURNED AWAY... THEN WAS STARTLED TO SEE TWO OF THE TRAWLER'S CREW MAKE A LAST DEFIANT ATTACK ON THE OTHER TYPHOON.



THE LAST BURST WAS DEADLY ACCURATE, RIDDLING THE TYPHOON'S COCKPIT WITH CANNON SHELLS. A SUDDEN SEARING PAIN STUNG TIMBER'S LEFT EYE.



SICK AND FAINT FROM HIS INJURY, TIMBER SOMEHOW WRENCHED THE PLANE UP FROM THE LICKING WAVES AND STEERED HER HOMEWARD. WAGGA SEEMED MORE CURIOUS THAN SYMPATHETIC.

HOW'S YOUR LUCK, TIMBER? WHAT HAPPENED?



WHEN HE HAD BROUGHT THE TYPHOON DOWN TO A BUMPY LANDING, TIMBER'S REMAINING STRENGTH DRAINED AWAY. EVEN THEN WAGGA'S BRASH HUMOUR COULD NOT SEE THE SERIOUSNESS OF HIS SQUADRON LEADER'S INJURY.

GOT A SPLINTER IN THE EYE, EH? RECKON HE GOT A BIT OF HIS OWN BACK. TIMBER... SPLINTER! GET IT?



TIMBER WAS TAKEN TO THE STATION MEDICAL OFFICER WHO EXAMINED HIS INJURED EYE...

LOOKS TO ME AS IF A FRAGMENT OF METAL HAS LODGED IN THE EYE. WE'LL HAVE TO GET HIM TO HOSPITAL QUICKLY.

I'LL 'PHONE FOR AN AMBULANCE AT ONCE, SIR!



ARRIVING AT THE HOSPITAL, THE SQUADRON LEADER WAS TAKEN TO THE OPERATING ROOM, WHERE A SURGEON OPERATED AT ONCE TO SAVE HIS SIGHT. . .



TIMBER UNDERWENT SEVERAL OPERATIONS, AND AFTER THE FINAL ONE, AS HE BABBLLED IN DELIRIUM, IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT THE AIRMAN'S NERVES HAD BEEN AFFECTED BY THE INCIDENT.

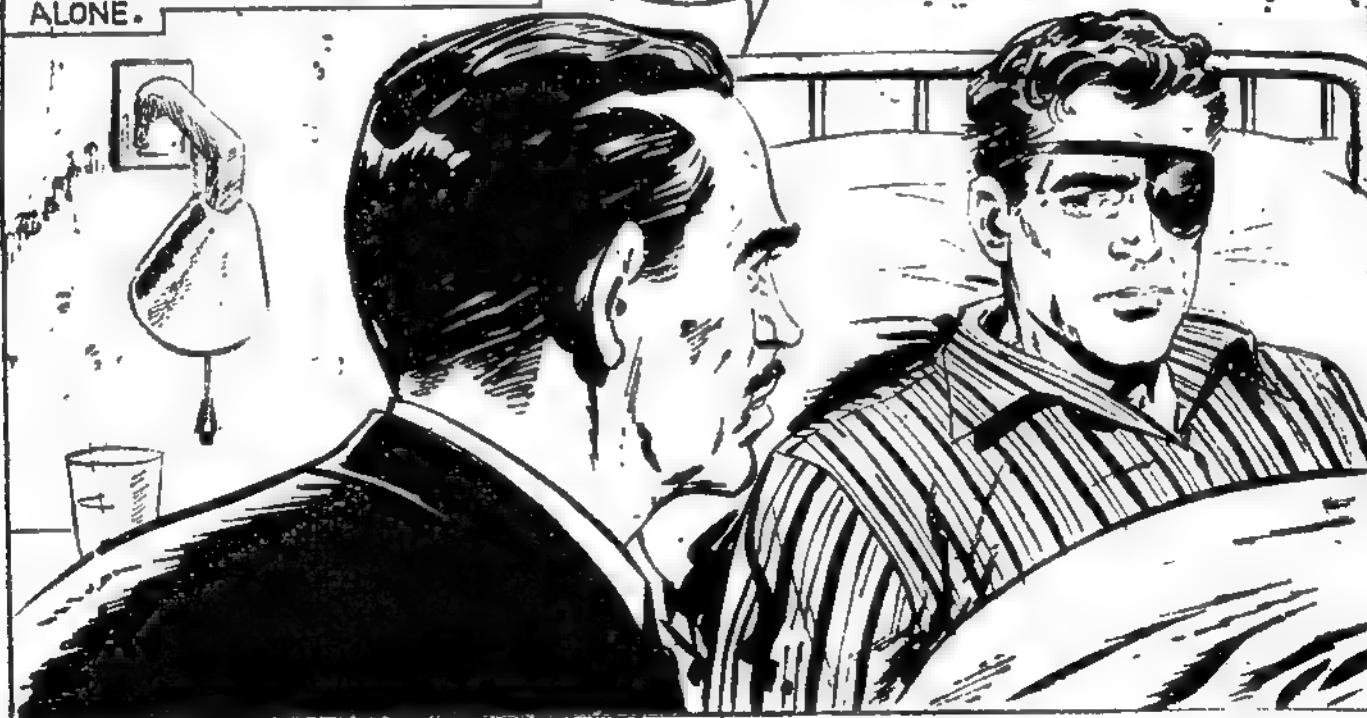
DON'T SHOOT! DON'T SHOOT!

HE'S ALWAYS HAVING THIS SAME NIGHTMARE - GUNS!

HE WILL NOT LOSE HIS EYESIGHT, MATRON... AND HE MAY NOT LOSE THIS FEAR OF GUNFIRE!

THANKS TO SKILLED SURGERY, THE SQUADRON LEADER'S EYESIGHT WAS SAVED. WHILE CONVALESCING HE WAS VISITED IN TURN BY ALL THE SQUADRON. WAGGA WENT TO THE HOSPITAL ALONE.

THAT WAS A PRETTY GOOD JOB WE DID ON THOSE BOATS, COBBER... FAIR DINKUM!



AS HE TALKED ABOUT THE ATTACK, WAGGA NOTICED A LOOK OF STRAIN ON TIMBER'S FACE, AND THE PILOT'S HANDS CLENCH AND BEGIN TO TREMBLE.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, TIMBER... IS SOMETHING WORRYING YOU?



SENSING THERE WAS SOMETHING WRONG WITH TIMBER, WAGGA SPOKE WITH THE MATRON.

WHAT'S WORRYING THE SQUADRON LEADER, MATRON? HE SEEMED QUITE PUT OUT WHEN I SPOKE OF OUR LAST ACTION.

THE SHOCK OF NEARLY LOSING HIS SIGHT HAS UPSET HIS NERVES, LEAVING A FEAR OF GUNFIRE.



WAGGA WENT AWAY THOUGHTFULLY...

TIMBER AFRAID OF FLAK, EH?... DOESN'T SOUND TOO ROSY FOR THE SQUADRON!



Chapter 2. ROCKETS

IT WAS SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE TIMBER WAS DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL, AND AFTER SOME LEAVE HE REJOINED HIS SQUADRON WHICH HAD MOVED TO AN AIRFIELD ON THE HAMPSHIRE COAST AND WERE LIVING UNDER CANVAS. WHEN HE ARRIVED THERE, STEVE COLLIER, HIS OTHER FLIGHT-COMMANDER, WAS THE FIRST TO GREET HIM...

HIYA, TIMBER! GOOD TO SEE YOU!

HÜLLO, STEVE! IT'S GRAND TO BE BACK!

HEY, YOU CHAPS! HERE'S TIMBER!

CENTRAL
ALARM POST
11.50.

AS HE WAS SHOWN ROUND THE CAMP, STEVE POINTED OUT THAT THE SQUADRON'S TYPHOONS WERE NOW ARMED WITH ROCKET PROJECTILES.

NO MORE BOMBS. IT'S ROCKETS NOW, TIMBER... EIGHT OF 'EM!

THAT OUGHT TO SHAKE JERRY!

IT SHAKES ME!

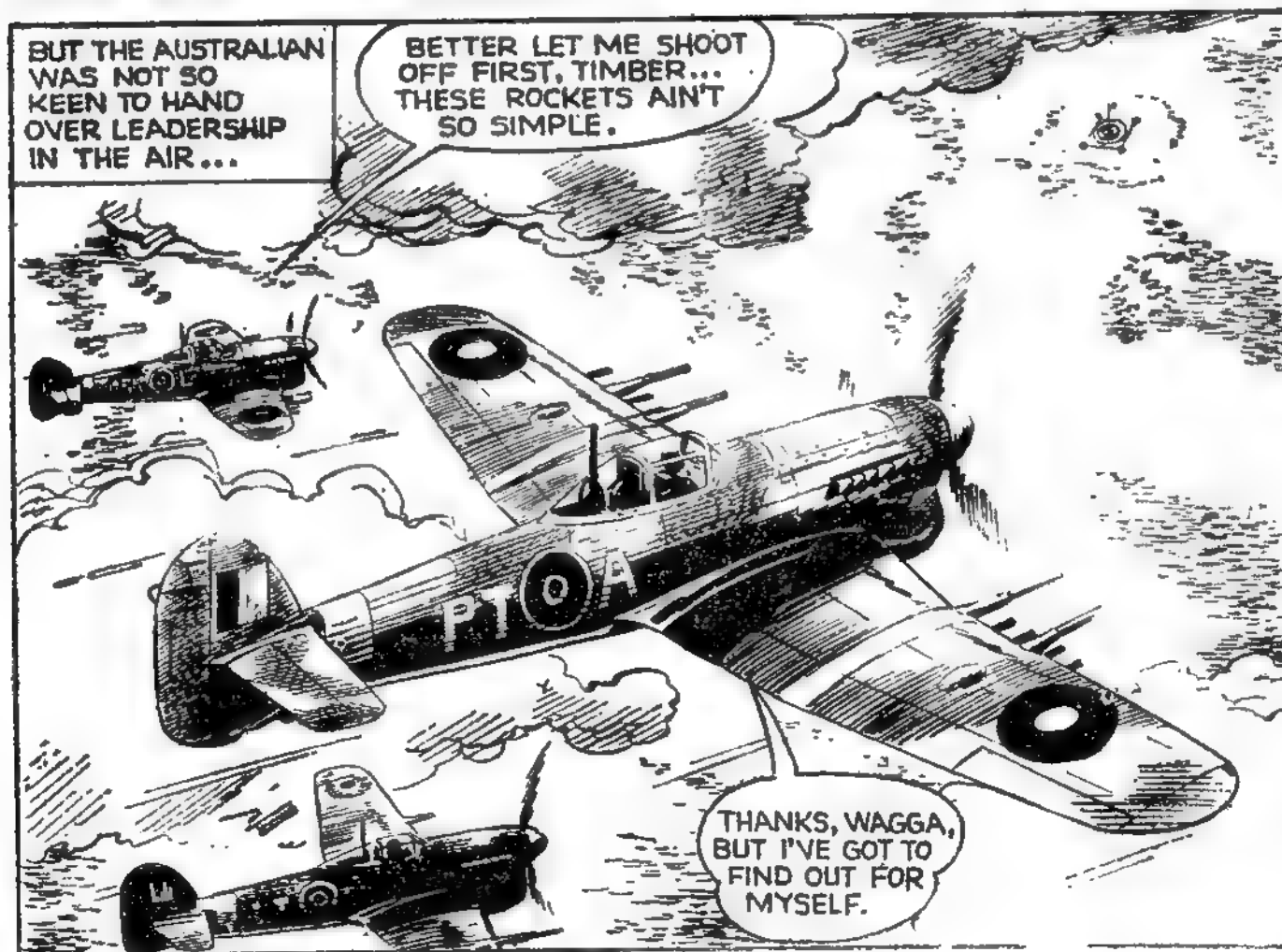




Rocket Typhoons



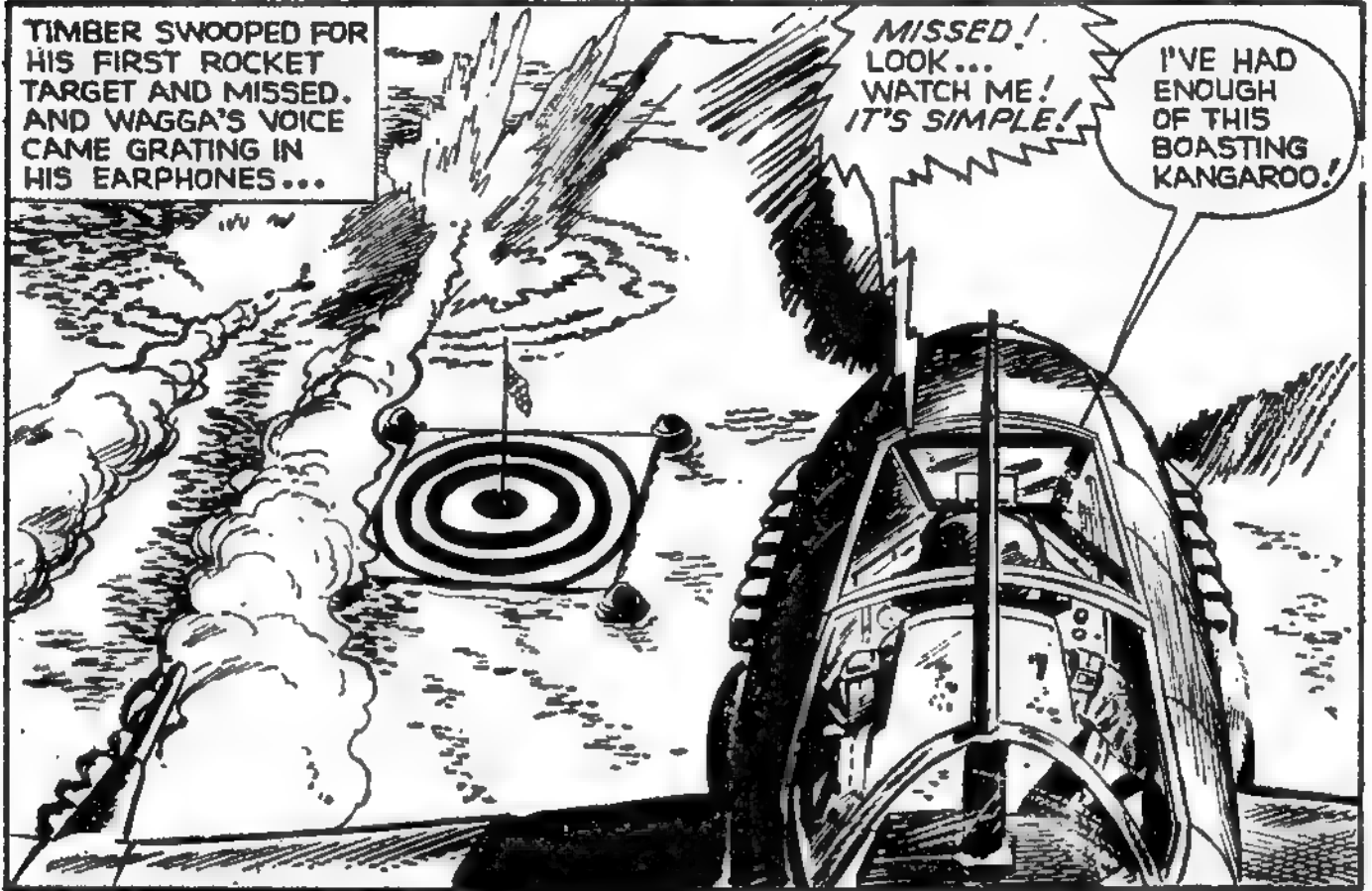




TIMBER SWOOPED FOR HIS FIRST ROCKET TARGET AND MISSED. AND WAGGA'S VOICE CAME GRATING IN HIS EARPHONES...

MISSED!
LOOK...
WATCH ME!
IT'S SIMPLE!

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS BOASTING KANGAROO!



AND IT DIDN'T HELP TIMBER'S FEELINGS WHEN THE BRAGGING WAGGA PUT HIS ROCKETS PLUMB IN THE CENTRE OF THE TARGET.

WHAT DID I TELL YOU...
SMACK ON THE NOSE!



Rocket Typhoons

NEXT MORNING, OUTSIDE
THE INTELLIGENCE VAN...

SEA TARGETS ARE
NO GOOD. I'VE FIXED
UP FOR US TO
SHOOT AT SOME
OLD ARMY
STUFF!

IN FUTURE, I'LL
DECIDE WHEN
A TARGET'S
NO GOOD!

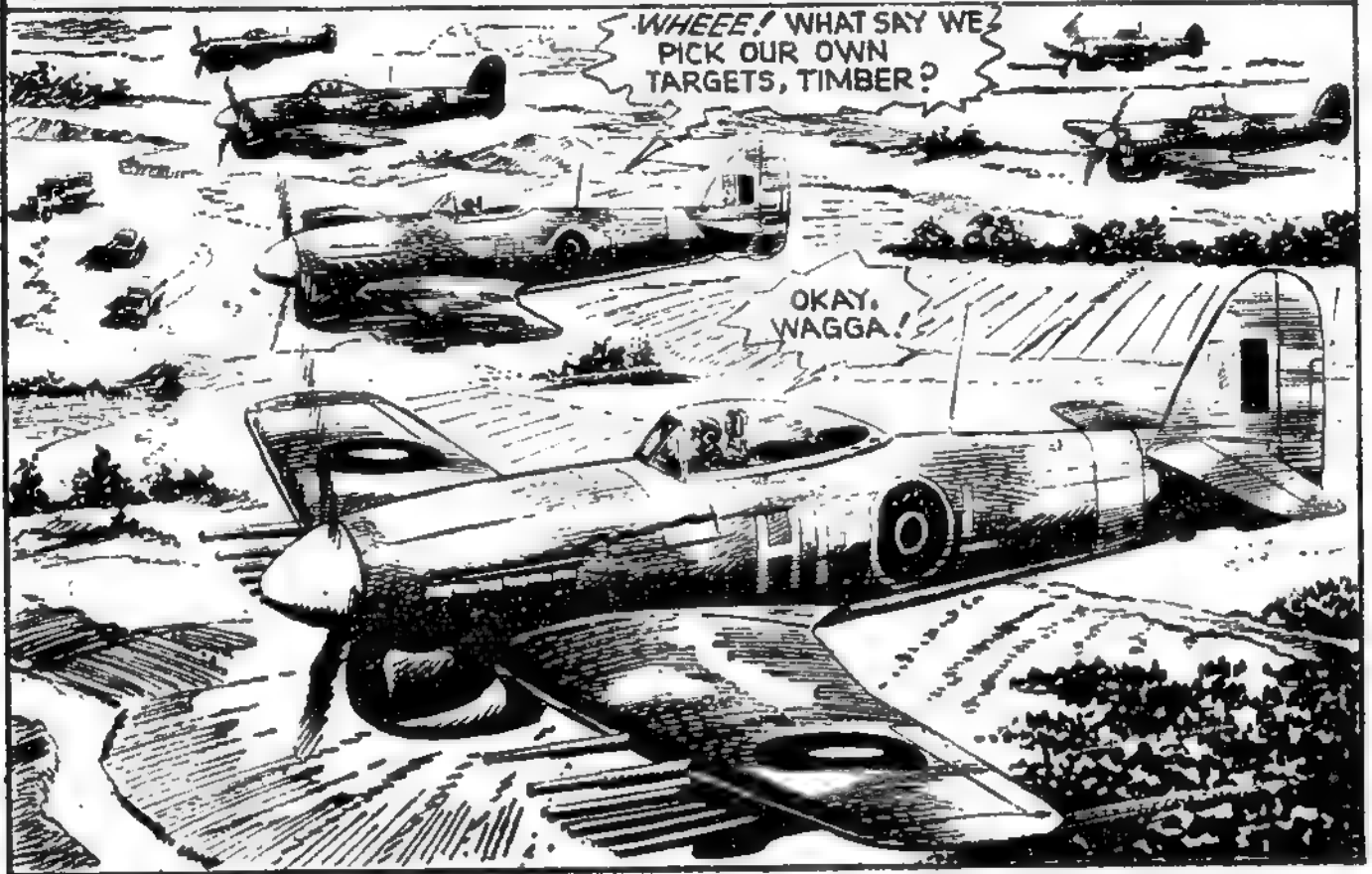


YOU'VE GOT TO TALK
TOUGHER THAN THAT,
TIMBER. OR YOU'LL HAVE
THAT BOSSY AUSTRALIAN
RUNNING THE SQUADRON!

DON'T WORRY...
I'LL FIX HIM WHEN
THE RIGHT TIME
COMES!



TIMBER DID NOT ALLOW HIS PERSONAL FEELINGS TO AFFECT HIS JUDGEMENT. WAGGA'S IDEA OF PRANGING OLD ARMY TANKS WAS A GOOD ONE AND TIMBER ACTED ON IT...

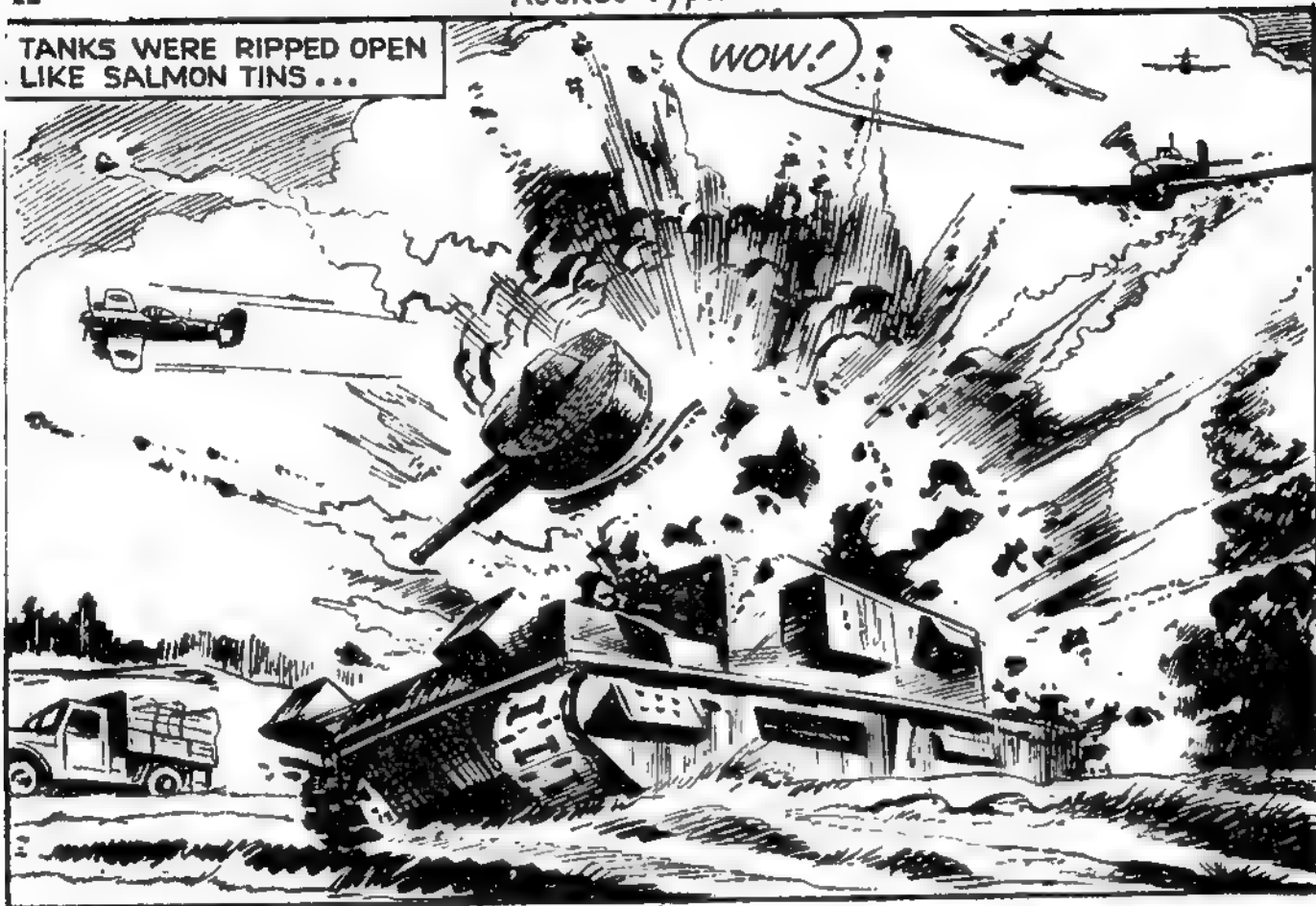


TIMBER LED HIS SECTION IN A MOCK ATTACK AND SCORED HIS FIRST HIT, AND THE FEARFUL POWER OF THESE ROCKETS MADE HIM GASP...



TANKS WERE RIPPED OPEN
LIKE SALMON TINS...

WOW!



CIRCLING THE SMOKING RUINS,
TIMBER FELT AN INFLOW OF
BADLY NEEDED SELF-CONFIDENCE.
ONLY WAGGA STOPPED HIM
FEELING COMPLETELY HAPPY.

MAYBE WHEN
THE BLITZ STARTS
IT'LL KNOCK THAT
CHIP OFF WAGGA'S
SHOULDER.



Chapter 3. ORDEAL BY GUNFIRE

BUT WHEN THE ORDER CAME THROUGH FOR THE SQUADRON'S FIRST SORTIE, TIMBER FOUND WAGGA EVEN MORE ARGUMENTATIVE.

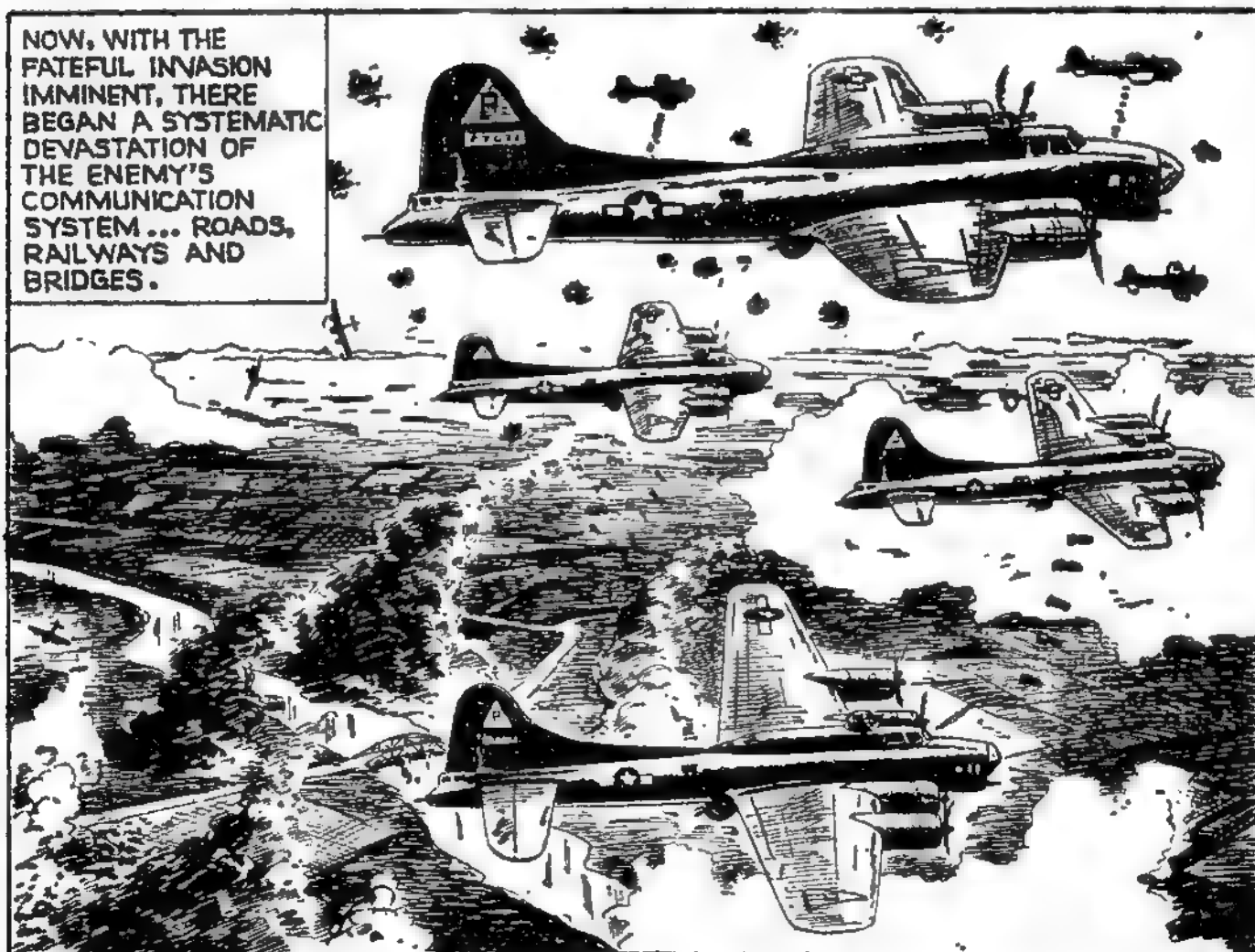
BUT WHY KEEP TOGETHER?

BECAUSE THAT'S THE WAY I WANT IT!

OH, STOP BINDING, WAGGA!



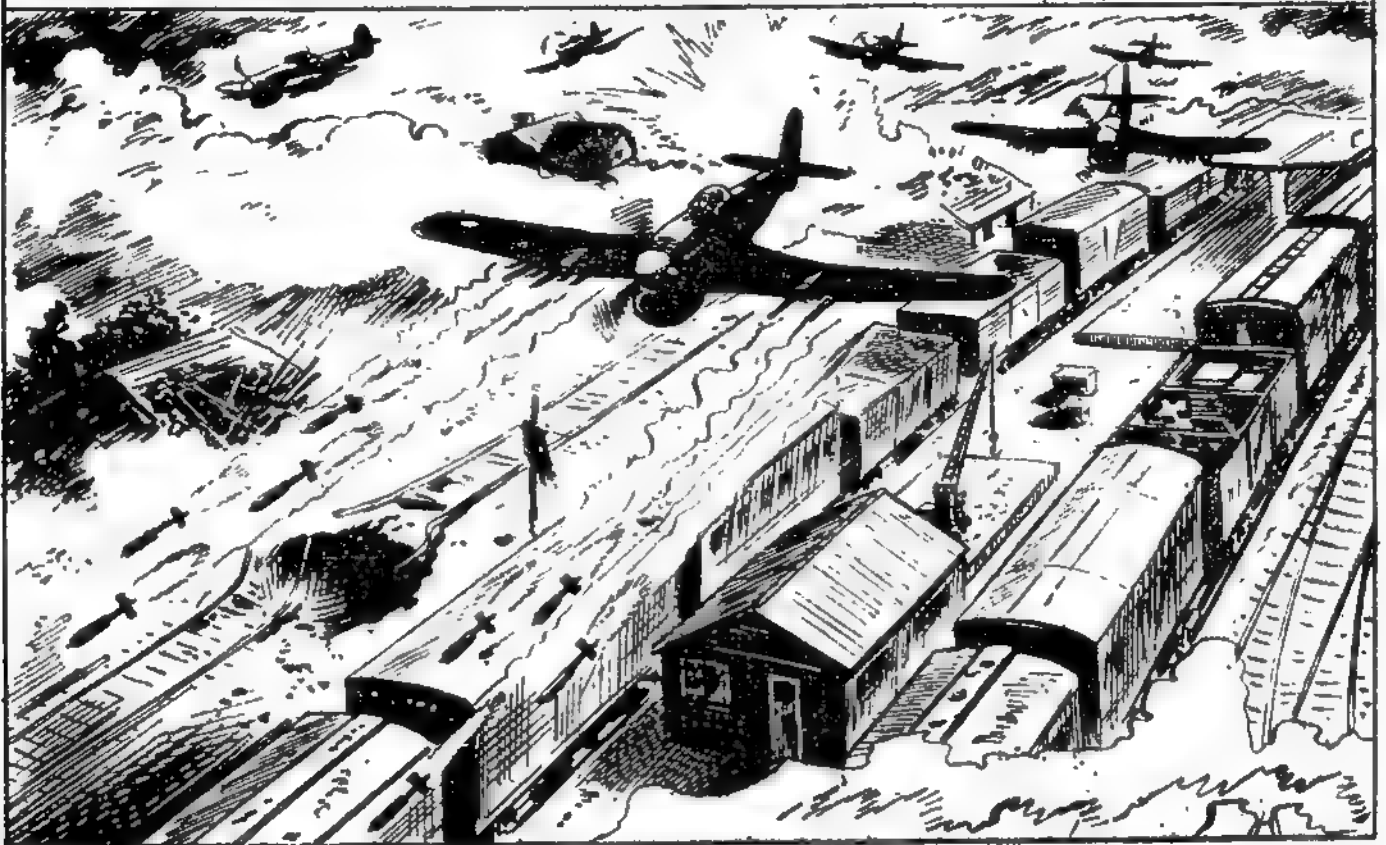
NOW, WITH THE FATEFUL INVASION IMMINENT, THERE BEGAN A SYSTEMATIC DEVASTATION OF THE ENEMY'S COMMUNICATION SYSTEM... ROADS, RAILWAYS AND BRIDGES.



AND AMIDST ALL THIS
FLAME AND FURY WENT
THE ROCKET TYPHOONS...



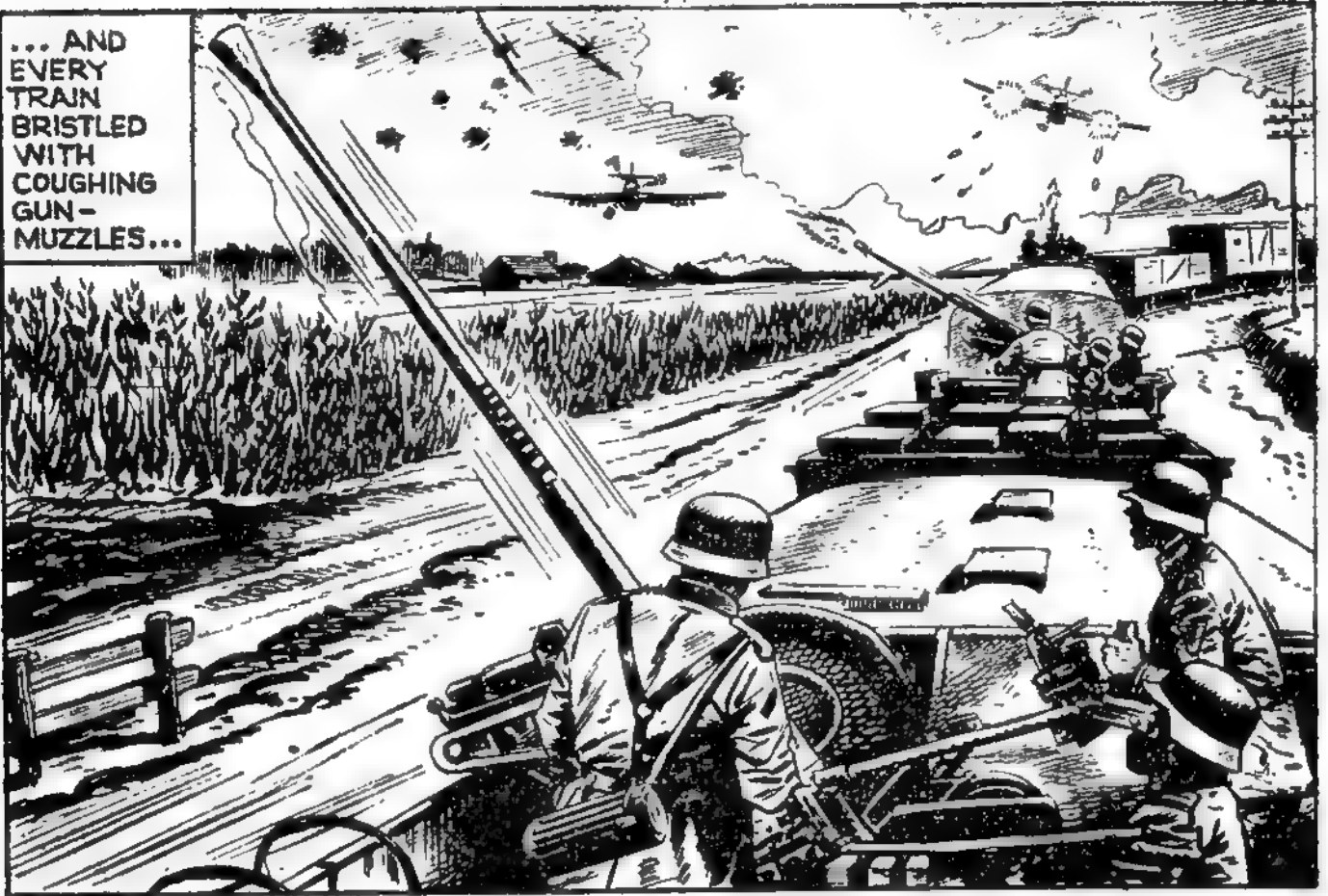
TIMBER WOODMAN LED SORTIE AFTER SORTIE, SCREAMING ALONG ROADS AND RAILS AND PUNCHING SIZZLING ROCKETS INTO ANYTHING THAT OFFERED. HE WAS UNAWARE OF THE FEAR THAT WAS SLOWLY PILING UP WITHIN HIM.



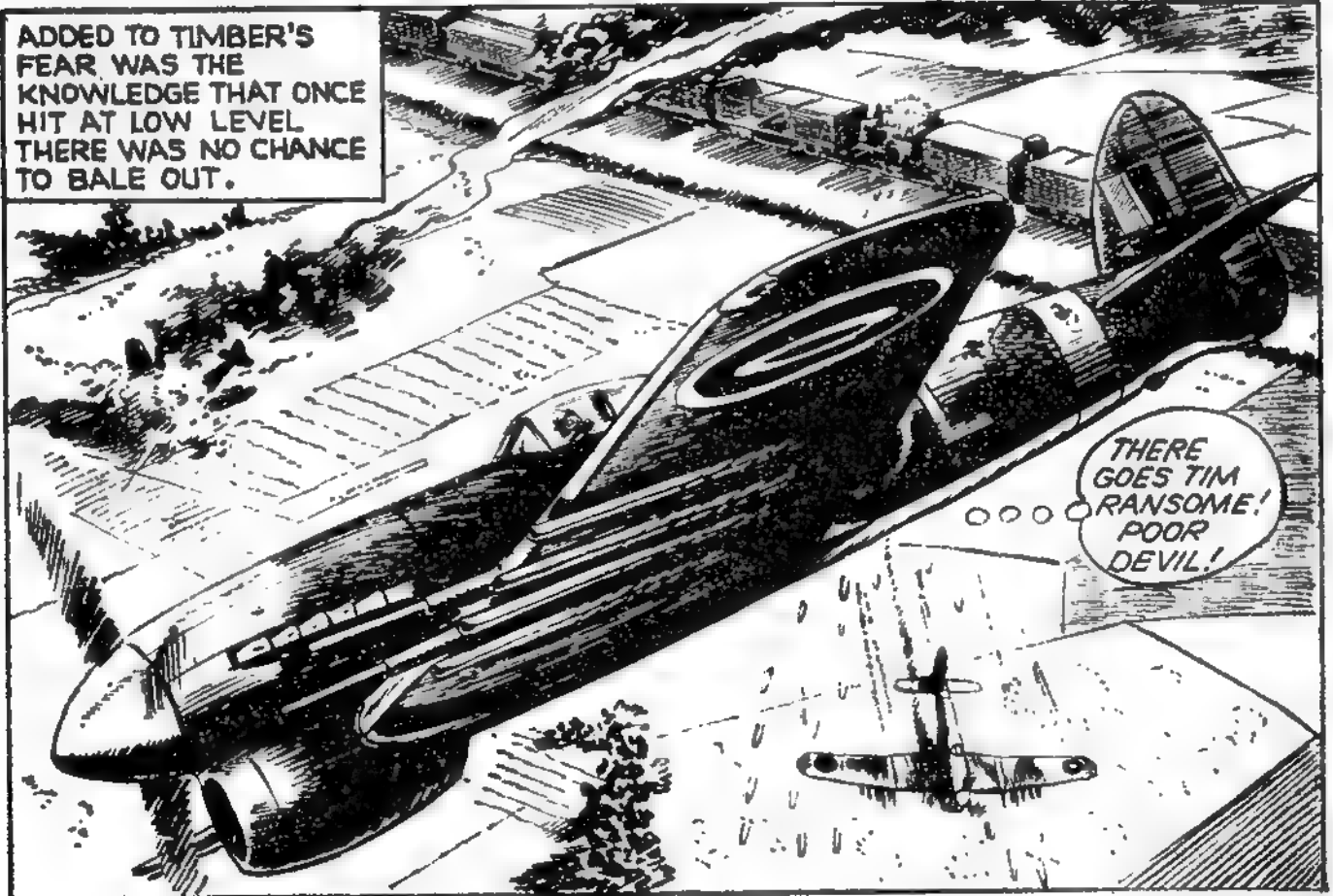
IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE ENEMY RETALIATED WITH TREBLED GUN DEFENCES THAT TIMBER'S SLEEPING FEAR BECAME FULLY AWAKE. EVERY GERMAN CONVOY HAD ITS SPITTING BATTERIES...



... AND EVERY TRAIN BRISTLED WITH COUGHING GUN-MUZZLES...



ADDED TO TIMBER'S FEAR WAS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ONCE HIT AT LOW LEVEL THERE WAS NO CHANCE TO BALE OUT.



AS THE PACE MOUNTED SO DID
TIMBER'S INNER TENSION. WITH THE
ENEMY CROWDING IN EVER MORE
GUNS, EACH SORTIE BECAME MORE
OF A NIGHTMARE THAN THE LAST...

JERRY'S
GOT OUR
RANGE ALL
RIGHT. YOUR
KITE'S FULL
OF HOLES,
TIMBER...
LIKE A SIEVE!

YEAH...
VERY FUNNY,
WAGGA.

EACH NEW DAY BROUGHT ITS
DREAD MOMENTS FOR TIMBER AS
HE FLEW OVER THE GERMAN GUNS
SWINGING VICIOUSLY UP AT HIM.

TIMBER THOUGHT HIS FEAR OF GUNFIRE WAS A
SECRET TO HIMSELF. BUT WAGGA, REMEMBERING
THE MATRON'S WORDS, HAD NOTICED HOW
NERVOUS HIS SQUADRON LEADER WAS
LOOKING.

I THOUGHT SO ...
TIMBER'S CRACKING UP.
MAYBE I'LL GET THIS
SQUADRON AFTER ALL.

WAGGA COULD NOT RESIST FINDING OUT IF HE WAS RIGHT, AND AT ONCE THE ASTUTE TIMBER READ THE AUSSIE'S MIND.

THE FLAK GETTING YOU DOWN, TIMBER? WHY DON'T YOU LAY OFF FLYING FOR A BIT?

ARE YOU CRAZY?



THE NEXT MORNING, AS THE C.O. READ OUT THE SQUADRON'S NEW TARGET ORDERS, TIMBER'S INNER FEARS GREW STRONGER.

... JERRY'S E-BOATS, BASED ALONG THE FRENCH COAST, WILL BE A MENACE TO OUR INVASION CRAFT - SO THEY'VE GOT TO BE WIPE OUT. THE BASES ARE WELL DEFENDED... YOU'LL HAVE SEVERAL TRIPS. TIMBER HAS ALL THE DETAILS. GOOD LUCK!



TIMBER FORCED HIMSELF TO SPEAK CALMLY AS HE BRIEFED HIS PILOTS ON WHAT WAS TO BE THEIR TOUGHEST JOB YET.

WE'VE BEEN GIVEN THE PICK OF THE TARGETS... THE HOME OF E-BOAT FLOTILLA D-FOUR-SIX. WE'LL FLY OUT TOGETHER AND THEN SPLIT INTO THE USUAL THREE SECTIONS. THERE'LL BE BAGS TO SHOOT AT, AND LET'S HAVE NO NATTERING ON THE R/T. WE WANT TO SURPRISE JERRY. ANY QUESTIONS?



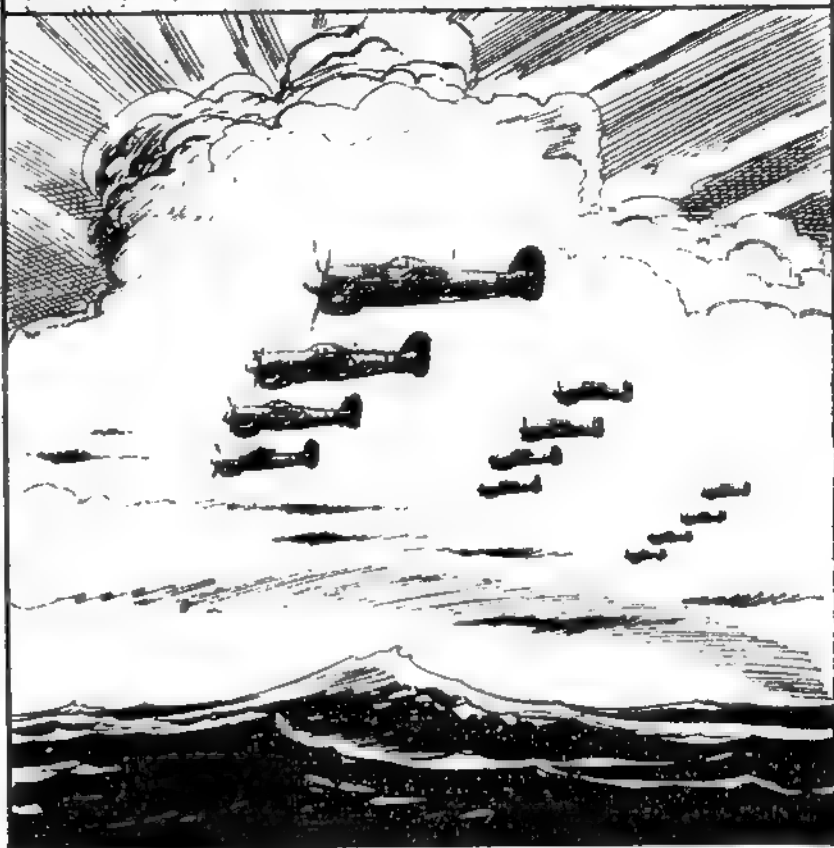
TIMBER TURNED SHARPLY AS WAGGA SPOKE. HE GUESSED WHAT WAS IN THE AUSTRALIAN PILOT'S MIND.

WHAT ABOUT FLAK, TIMBER?

YOU KNOW AS WELL AS ANYBODY... THE PLACE WILL BE LIFTING WITH IT! RIGHT... TAKE-OFF IN TEN MINUTES!

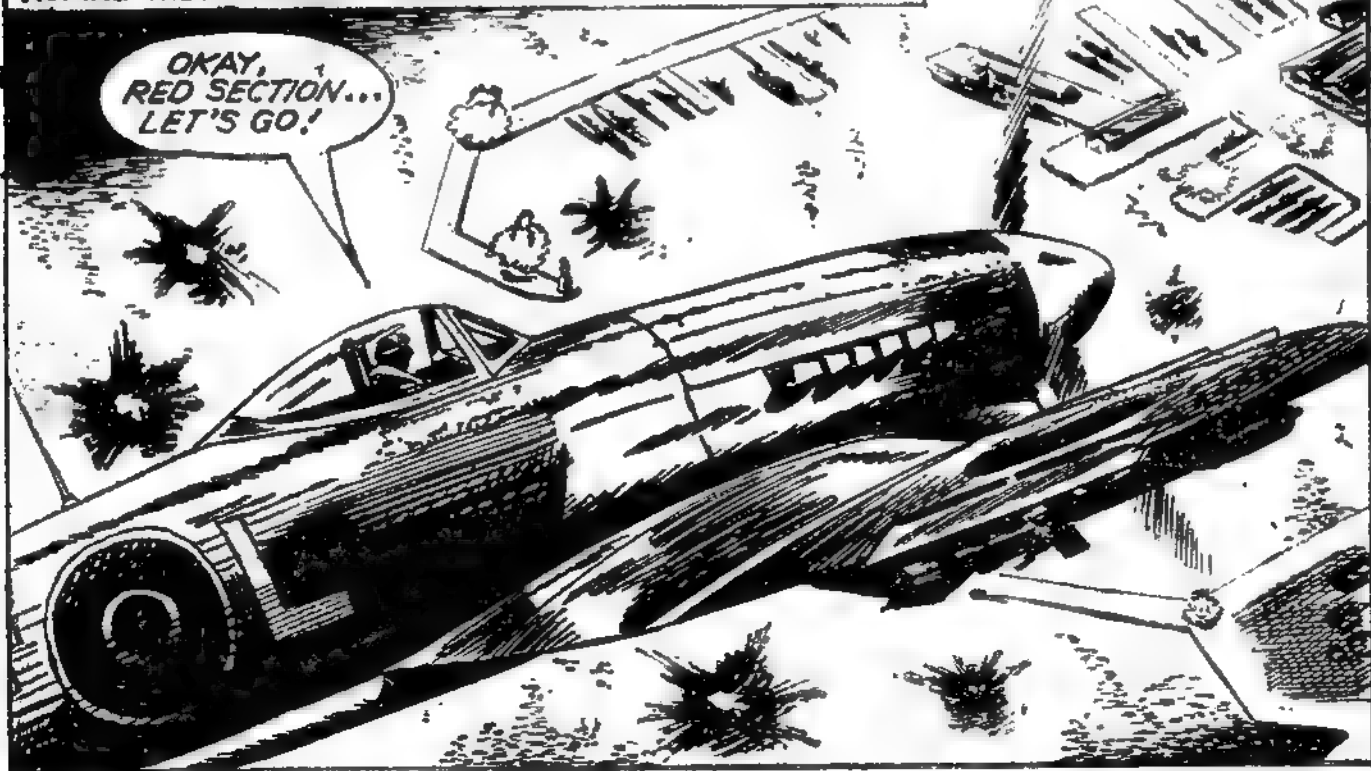


TIMBER LED HIS SQUADRON AT WAVE-TOP LEVEL, TRYING TO STILL THE FEARS THAT GRIPPED HIM. HE KNEW THAT HE MUST THINK ONLY OF THE TARGET AND NOT OF THE GUNS THAT RINGED IT.



ALL TOO SOON THEY WERE ON THE TARGET... ENEMY GUNS OPENED FIRE... AND TIMBER SNAPPED OUT HIS ORDERS, HOPING THEY SOUNDED MORE CONVINCING THAN HE FELT.

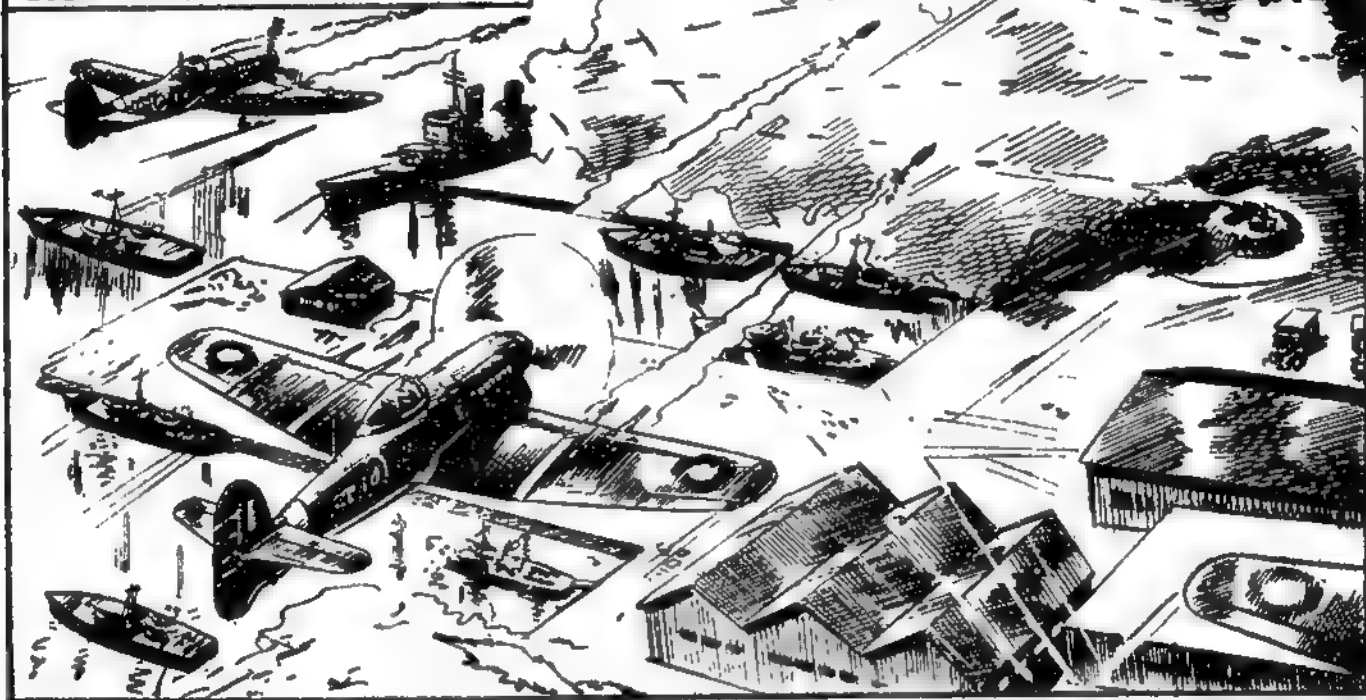
OKAY, RED SECTION... LET'S GO!



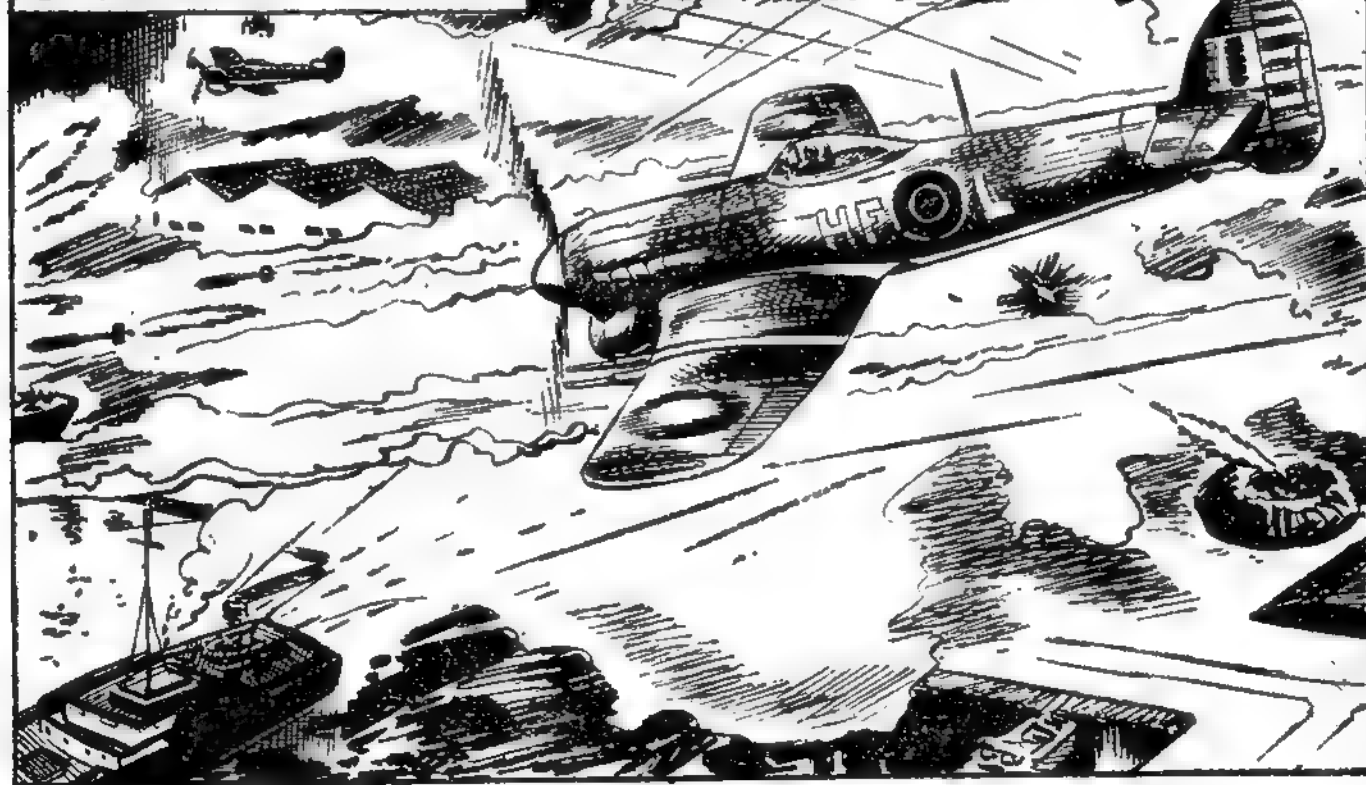
Rocket Typhoons

THE TYPHOONS' ROCKETS SCREECHED DOWN ON TO THE E-BOAT BASE ... AND A DEADLY BARRAGE CAME UP TO MEET THE PLANES. TIMBER HAD NEVER SEEN SO MUCH FLAK.

LET 'EM HAVE IT ... THEN ROUND AGAIN!



CIRCLING FOR A SECOND ATTACK, TIMBER WINCED AT THE RING OF GUN-FLASHES BELOW. THEN HE GLIMPSED MORE E-BOATS AND, GRITTING HIS TEETH, FLUNG HIS PLANE INTO A TWISTING DIVE WITH SIX ROCKETS AT THE READY...



AS TIMBER SENT HIS PLANE SCREAMING DOWN TOWARDS THE E-BOAT BASE, AN ENEMY ACK-ACK GUN OPENED FIRE ON HIM. FLAK SHATTERED HIS COCKPIT COVER ... AND FEAR SUDDENLY SHOWED IN THE PILOT'S FACE AS HE SAW THE GERMAN GUN BATTERY DIRECTLY AHEAD.



I'M TOO CLOSE... I'VE GOT TO FIRE MY ROCKETS - QUICKLY... AND GET AWAY!

PANIC STRICKEN, TIMBER WRENCHED THE TYPHOON INTO A CLIMB... AND AT THE SAME TIME RELEASED HIS ROCKETS. BUT THE PLANE'S NOSE WAS ALREADY TILTING UPWARDS AND THE MISSILES SPED HARMLESSLY INTO THE AIR...

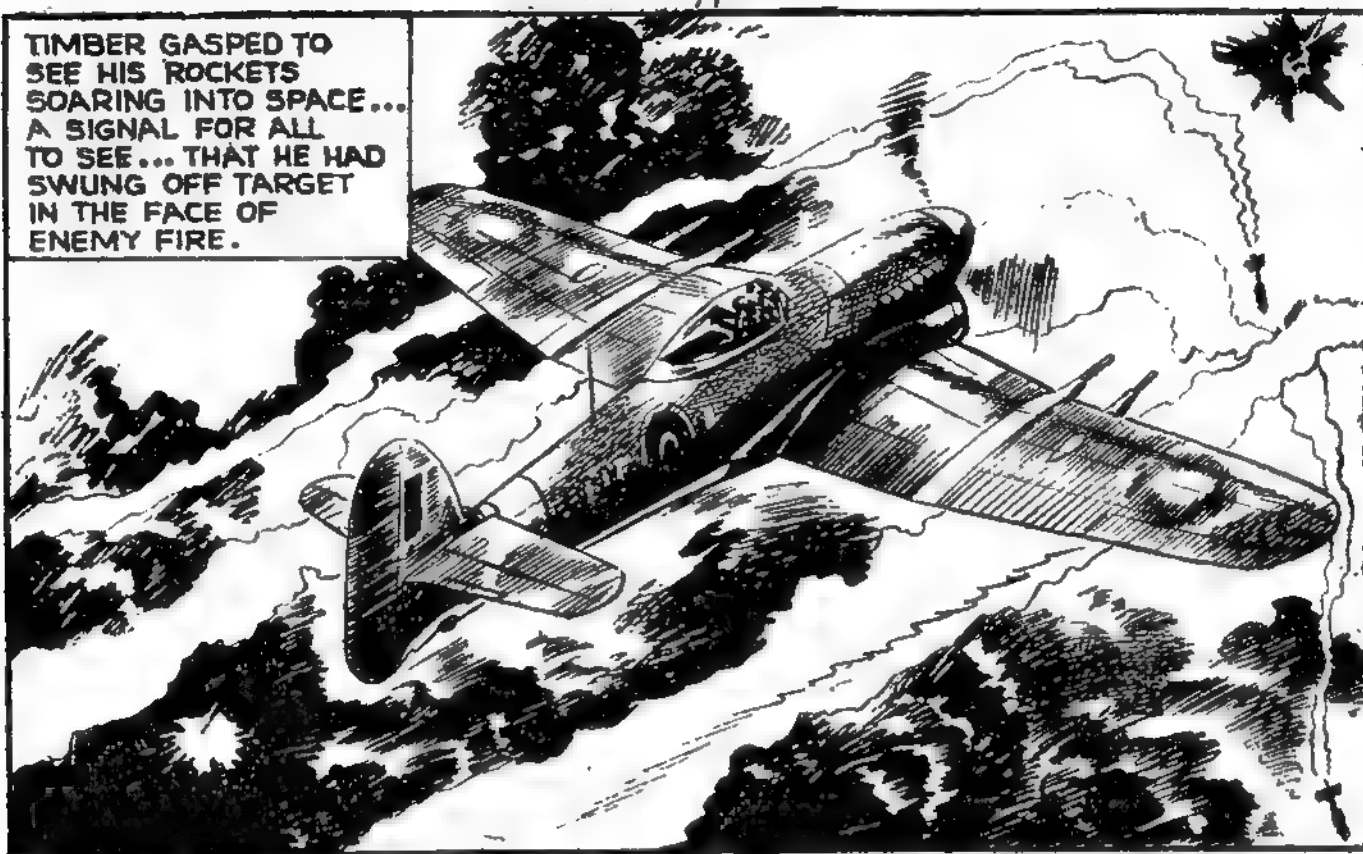


AHA! THAT SCARED HIM!

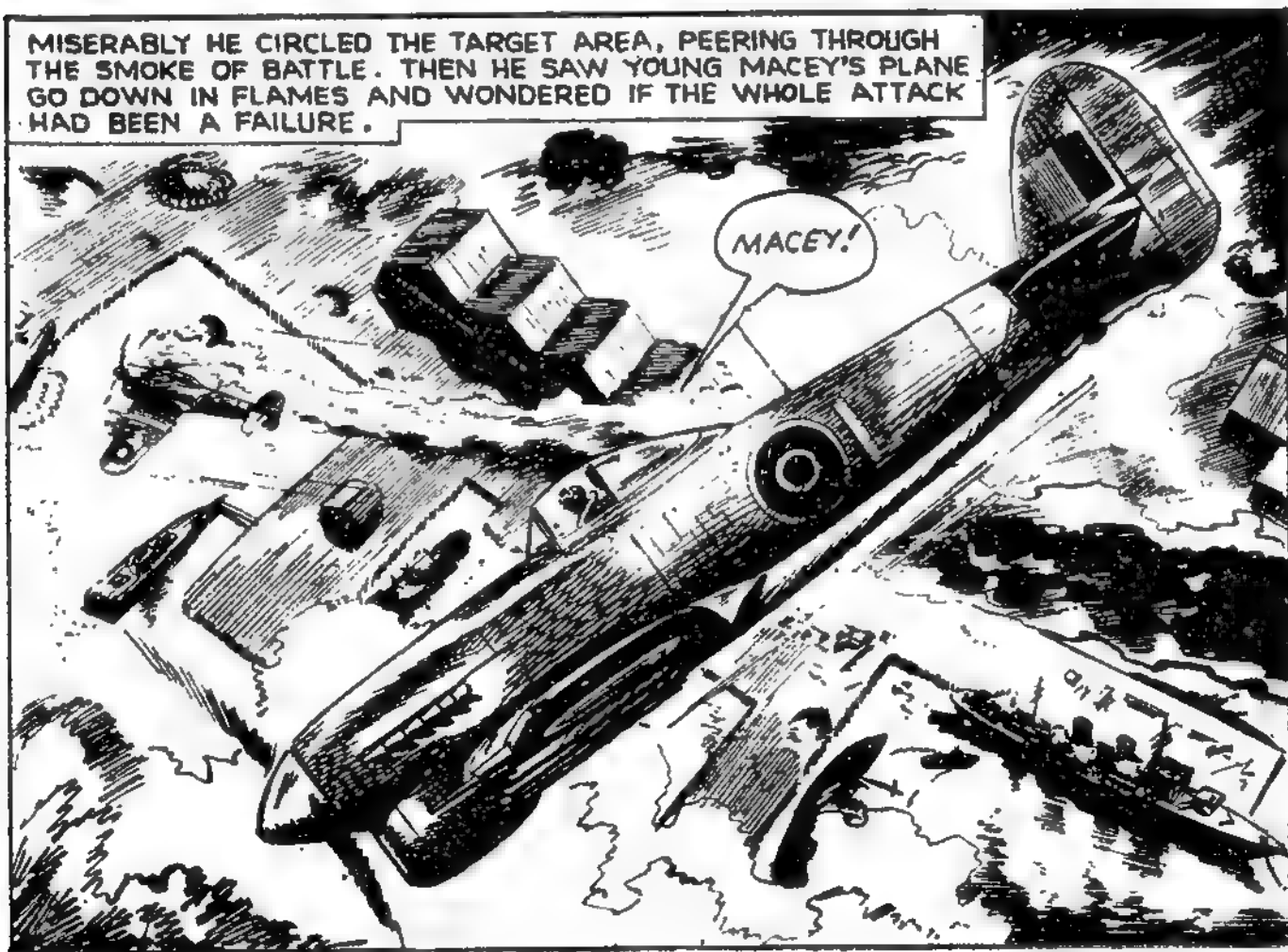
WE'VE FRIGHTENED THE SQUEALING PIG ENGLANDER!

HE'S GETTING RID OF HIS ROCKETS!

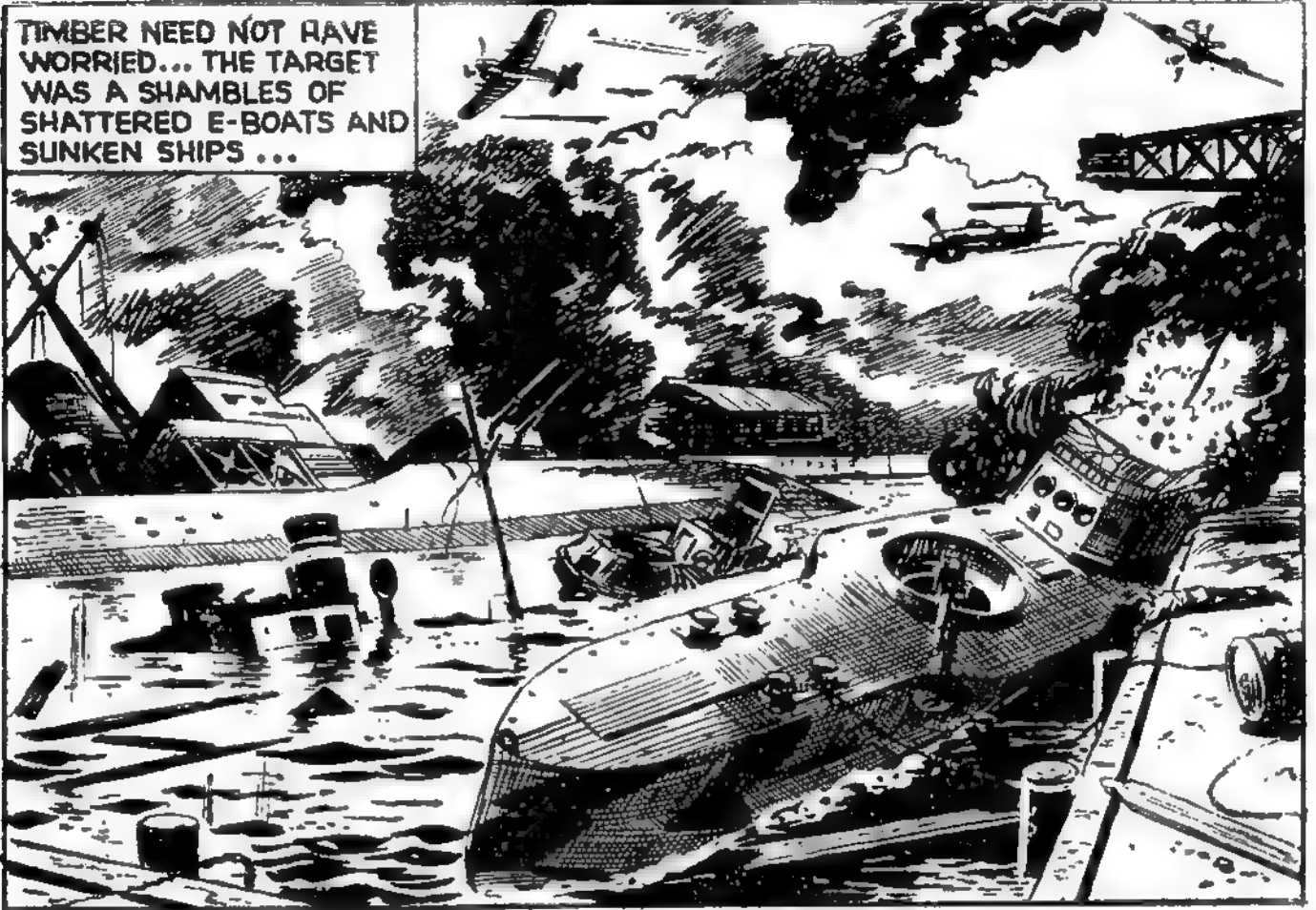
TIMBER GASPED TO SEE HIS ROCKETS SOARING INTO SPACE... A SIGNAL FOR ALL TO SEE... THAT HE HAD SWUNG OFF TARGET IN THE FACE OF ENEMY FIRE.



MISERABLY HE CIRCLED THE TARGET AREA, PEERING THROUGH THE SMOKE OF BATTLE. THEN HE SAW YOUNG MACEY'S PLANE GO DOWN IN FLAMES AND WONDERED IF THE WHOLE ATTACK HAD BEEN A FAILURE.

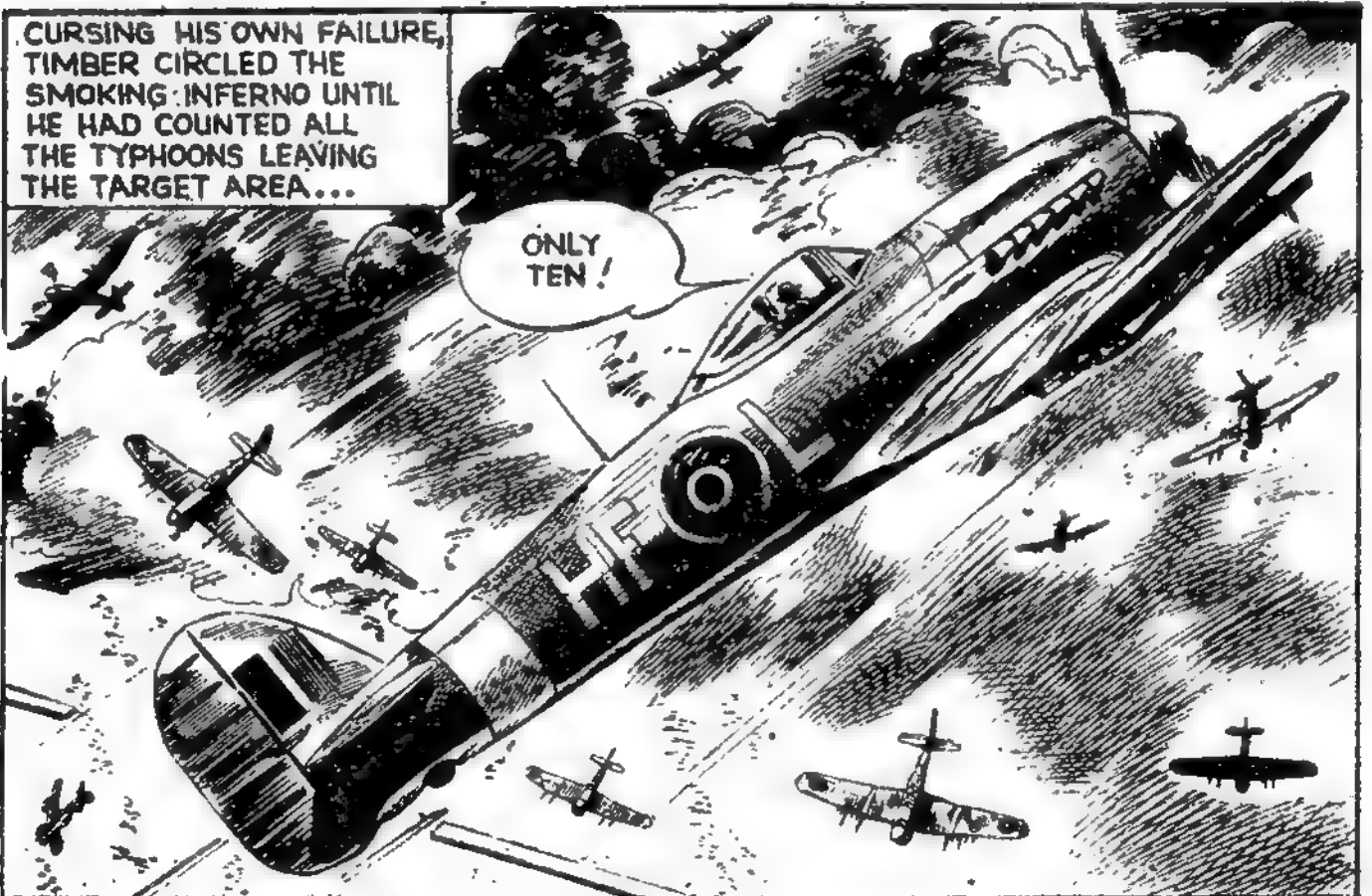


TIMBER NEED NOT HAVE WORRIED... THE TARGET WAS A SHAMBLES OF SHATTERED E-BOATS AND SUNKEN SHIPS ...



CURSING HIS OWN FAILURE, TIMBER CIRCLED THE SMOKING INFERNO UNTIL HE HAD COUNTED ALL THE TYPHOONS LEAVING THE TARGET AREA...

ONLY TEN!



TIMBER AND THE REMAINS OF HIS SQUADRON ARRIVED BACK AT BASE SILENT AND SUBDUED. THEY HAD LOST TWO OF THEIR NUMBER AND UNTIL THE PHOTOS CAME THROUGH THEY WOULD NOT EVEN KNOW IF THEY HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL. TIMBER FELT ALL EYES WERE UPON HIM AS HE WALKED FROM HIS PLANE.

I BET THEY THINK I MADE A RIGHT MESS OF THINGS.



BROODING OVER THINGS THAT EVENING, TIMBER WAS IN NO MOOD FOR WAGGA'S BRAND OF HUMOUR...

WELL, TIMBER, WHAT WERE YOU SHOOTING AT OVER THE TARGET... BUZZARDS? HA, HA!



WAGGA'S WORDS WERE FULL OF SPITE... AND A FURY MOUNTED WITHIN TIMBER...

I SPOTTED YOU, ALL RIGHT, WOODMAN... COR! THE INTREPID LEADER! DUCKING THE GUNS... THROWING AWAY...



TIMBER COULD NOT TAKE ANY MORE OF THE AUSTRALIAN PILOT'S SARCASM, AND...

...THROWING AWAY YOUR ROCKETS...
UGH!

I'VE HAD ABOUT ALL I CAN TAKE FROM YOU, WAGGA!

GINGERLY FEELING HIS NUMBED CHIN, WAGGA STARED UP AT THE WRATHFUL TIMBER...

ANY MORE CRACKS AND I'LL BEAT THE HIDE OFF YOU!

WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! YOU MIGHT HAVE YOUR OWN HIDE BEATEN!

Chapter 4. **ACHTUNG-TYPHOONS!**

AFTER THAT TIMBER WAS AWARE ALWAYS OF WAGGA'S MOCKING GRIN... ESPECIALLY WHEN ONE MORNING THE C.O. CAME BUSTLING IN WITH FRESH ORDERS...

NEW TARGETS, GENTLEMEN!
THIS TIME IT'S ENEMY RADAR
POSTS ALONG THE COAST!

WOW! THAT
MEANS BAGS OF FLAK,
... DOESN'T IT, TIMBER?

GOSH, YOU'RE RIGHT,
WAGGA... YOU CAN'T
SEE THE DARN THINGS
FOR GUNS. IT'LL
BE MURDER!



TOGETHER THE PILOTS WENT CAREFULLY THROUGH THE OPERATIONAL ORDER.

TOMORROW WILL BE AN ALL-OUT EFFORT...
SORTIE AFTER SORTIE. WE'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR
DEMOLISHING THREE OF THESE POSTS...AND WE'LL HAVE
TO KEEP IT UP UNTIL THEY ARE ALL FLATTENED... BECAUSE
THE INVASION IS IN ANOTHER TWENTY-FOUR HOURS... AND NO
GERMAN MUST BE LEFT TO HEAR IT COMING!

MY HAT...
THIS IS IT!
INVASION!





TIMBER BRIEFED HIS PILOTS QUIETLY AND CALMLY AND THERE WAS NO HINT IN HIS VOICE OF TREPIDATION AT THE COMING ORDEAL.

WE'LL BEAT UP THESE RADAR POSTS IN THREE SEPARATE SORTIES, COMING BACK EACH TIME TO RE-ARM AND RE-FUEL. LET'S HOPE WE PRANG EACH ONE AT THE FIRST GO. TYPHOONS WILL BE ATTACKING ALL OTHER POSTS ALONG THE COAST, SO THAT BY TONIGHT THE ENEMY WILL BE STONE-DEAF TO ALL SOUNDS OF INVASION... IF WE DO OUR JOB. WE GO IN AT O-SIX-THIRTY HOURS. ANY QUESTIONS?



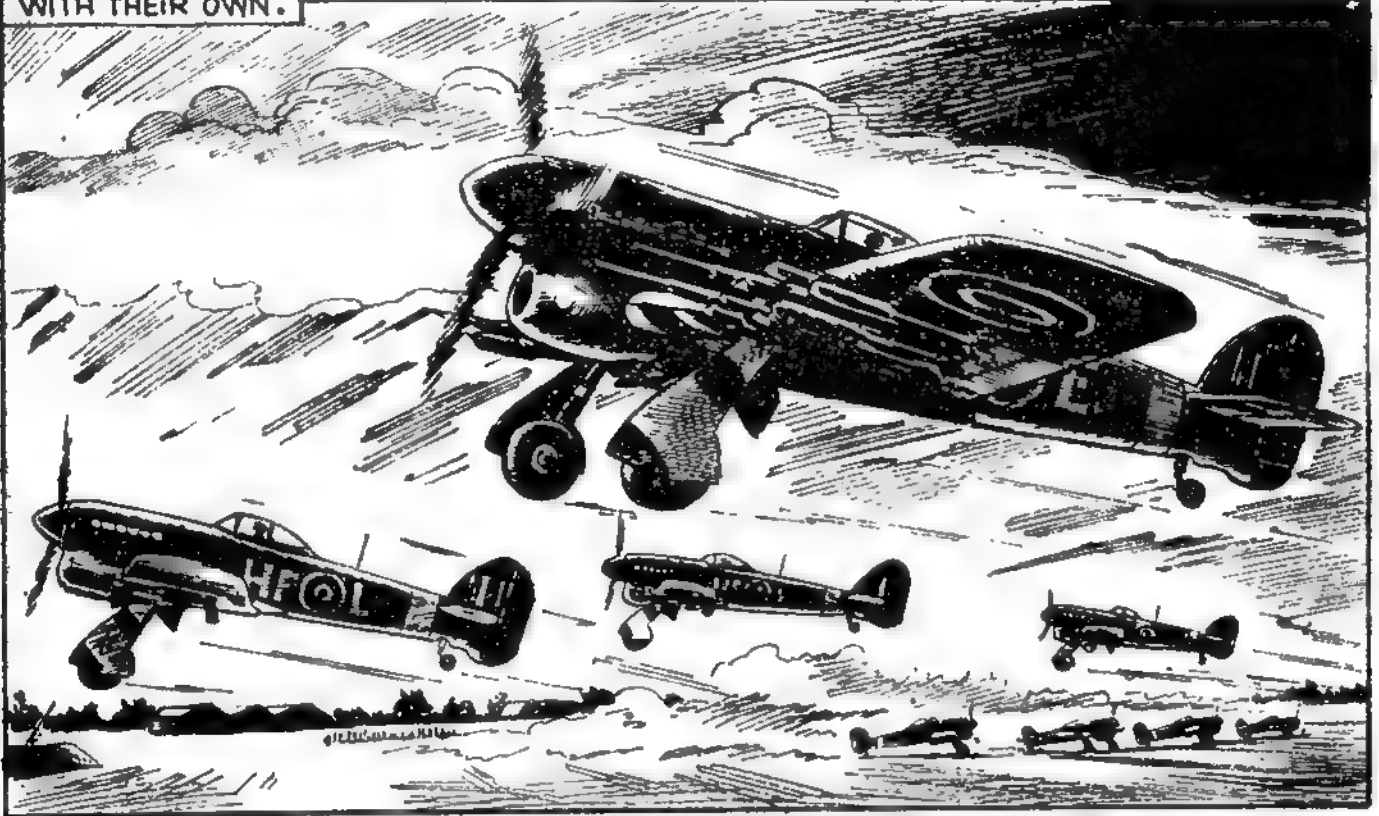
THE YOUNGEST PILOT THERE, "PINT-SIZE" PERRY, SPOKE UP, AND TIMBER LISTENED SYMPATHETICALLY, AWARE ALL THE TIME OF WAGGA'S IRONIC STARE.

IS THERE ANY WAY THROUGH THE FLAK, SKIPPER? YOU CAN HARDLY SEE THE RADAR POSTS FOR GUNS!

I'M AFRAID THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY THROUGH THE FLAK, PINT-SIZE... AND THAT'S THROUGH IT!



SOON THE AIRFIELD WAS SWIRLING WITH DUST AS THE TYPHOONS TRUNDLED TO THE TAKE-OFF AND ROSE INTO THE AIR TO A CRESCENDO OF BLARING ENGINES. AS USUAL TIMBER TOOK THE LEADING SECTION, LEAVING WAGGA AND STEVE TO FOLLOW UP WITH THEIR OWN.

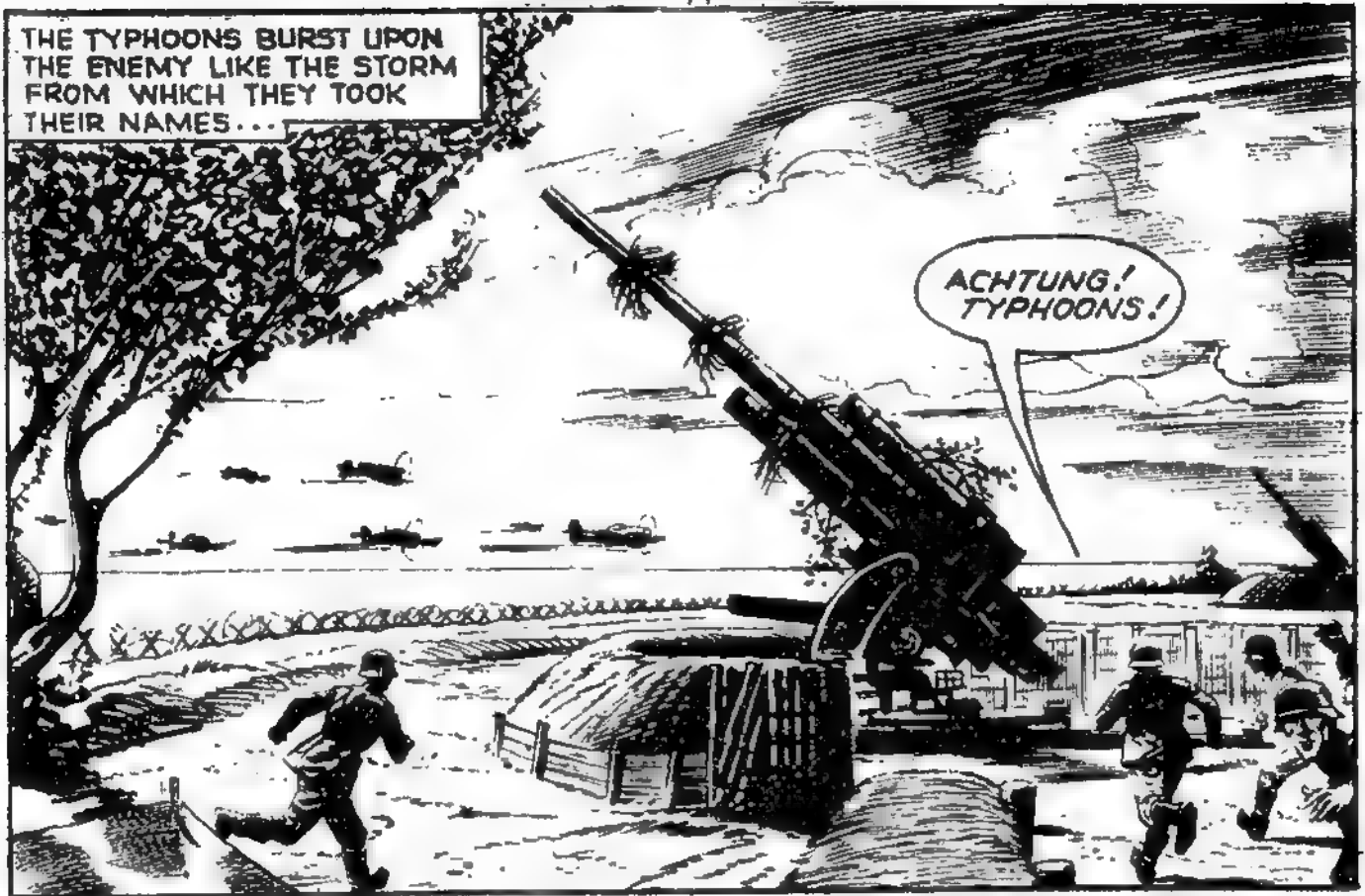


SURPRISE WAS IMPERATIVE, SO THE SQUADRON HUGGED SEA-LEVEL, MERE FEET FROM THE WHITE-CAPPED WAVES.



Rocket Typhoons

THE TYPHOONS BURST UPON THE ENEMY LIKE THE STORM FROM WHICH THEY TOOK THEIR NAMES...



THE FEARSOME ROCKETS SCREAMED DOWN UPON THE ENEMY AS THE FIRST ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS CRASHED INTO ACTION.



Rocket Typhoons

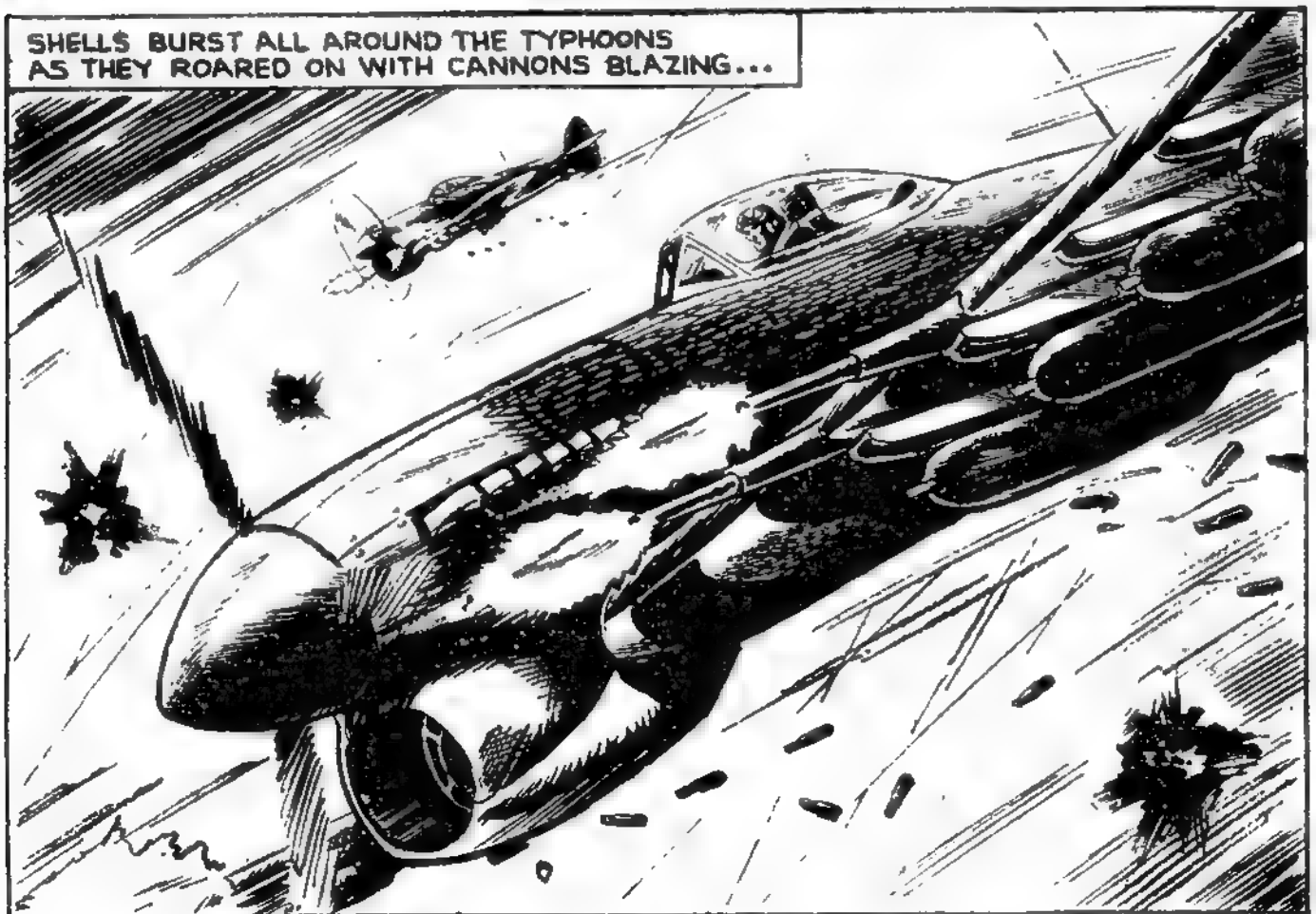
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WITH A SHARP ORDER TO HIS SECTION TO SHOOT UP THE GUN POSITIONS WITH CANNON AND KEEP THEIR ROCKETS FOR THE RADAR POST, TIMBER LED THE TYPHOONS IN A SCREAMING DIVE...

RED SECTION...
GO!



SHELLS BURST ALL AROUND THE TYPHOONS AS THEY ROARED ON WITH CANNONS BLAZING...



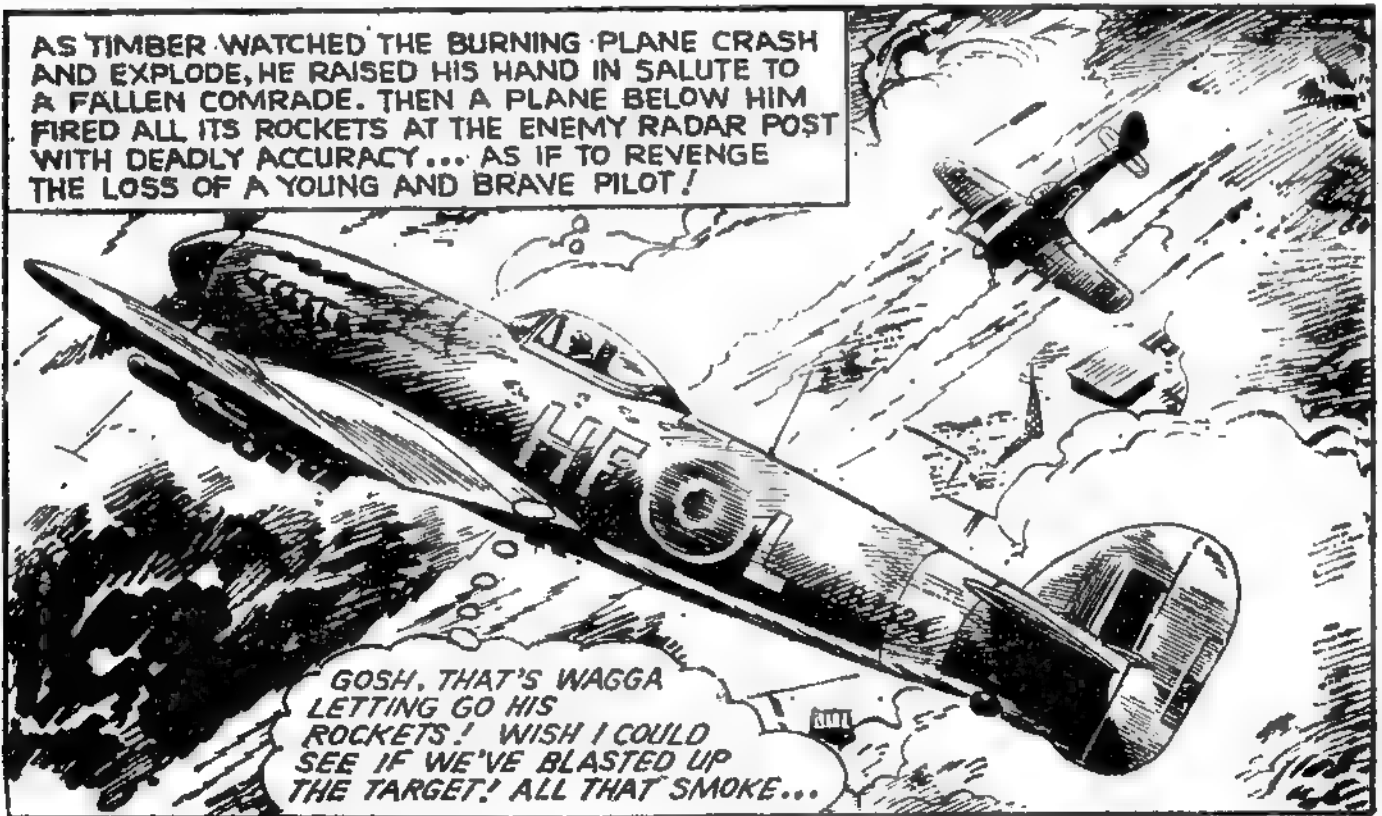
TIMBER SHUDDERED AS JAGGED PIECES OF SHRAPNEL TORE INTO HIS AIRFRAME. THE TARGET BEHIND HIM, HE SWUNG HIS PLANE INTO A STEEP CLIMBING TURN...



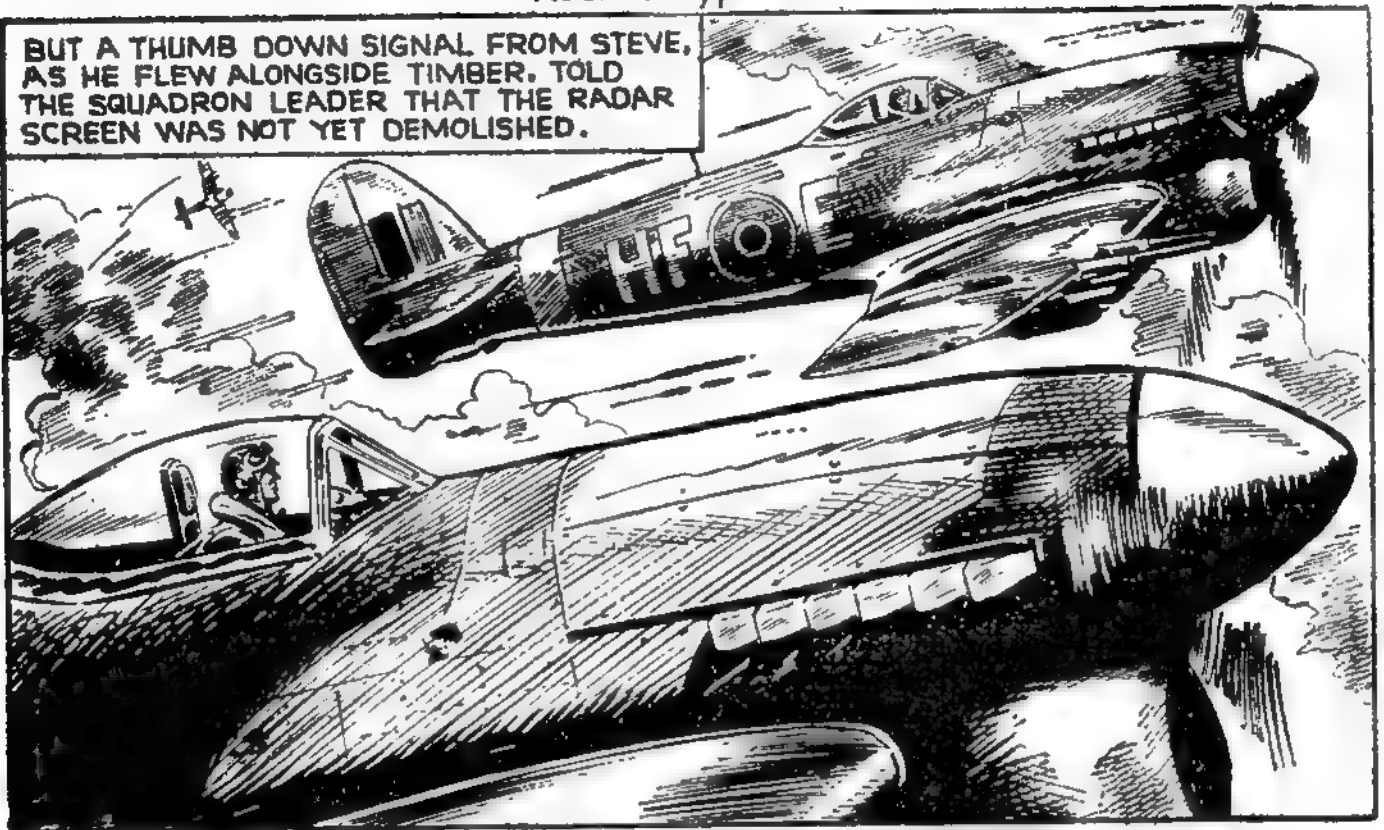
THEN THE SQUADRON LEADER GAZED IN HORROR AS A TYPHOON FELL EARTHWARDS IN FLAMES. IT WAS "PINT-SIZE" PERRY.



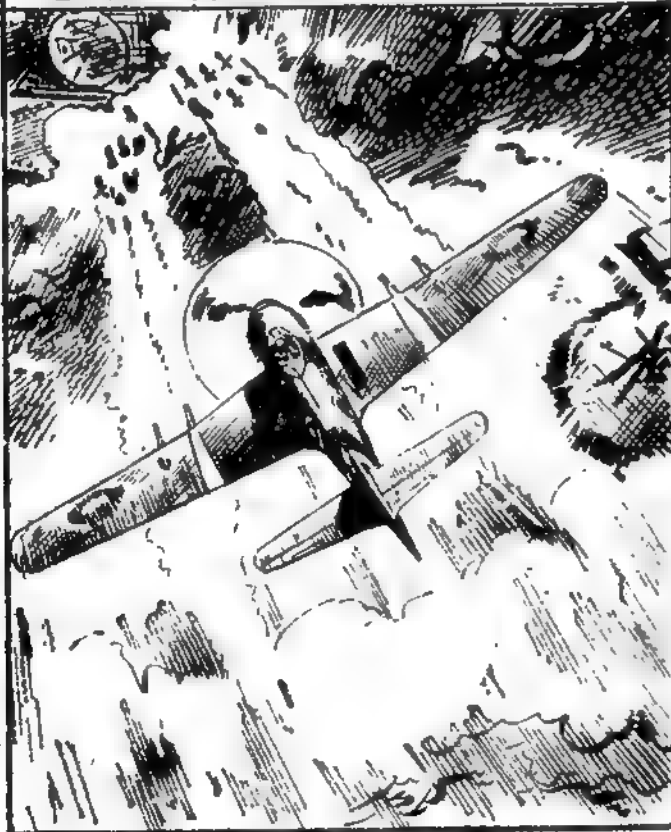
AS TIMBER WATCHED THE BURNING PLANE CRASH AND EXPLODE, HE RAISED HIS HAND IN SALUTE TO A FALLEN COMRADE. THEN A PLANE BELOW HIM FIRED ALL ITS ROCKETS AT THE ENEMY RADAR POST WITH DEADLY ACCURACY... AS IF TO REVENGE THE LOSS OF A YOUNG AND BRAVE PILOT!



BUT A THUMB DOWN SIGNAL FROM STEVE, AS HE FLEW ALONGSIDE TIMBER, TOLD THE SQUADRON LEADER THAT THE RADAR SCREEN WAS NOT YET DEMOLISHED.



NOW WAS THE MOMENT FOR TIMBER TO DELIVER HIS ROCKETS. THROUGH A BREAK IN THE SMOKE-SCREEN HE SAW THAT THE RADAR SCREEN WAS FULL OF HOLES BUT STILL STANDING. DOWN HE THUNDERED... AND RELEASED HIS DEADLY CARGO OF ROCKETS...



TIMBER WAS ON TARGET. HIS ROCKETS CRASHED INTO THE RADAR AERIALS AND THEY DISINTEGRATED IN FLAME AND SMOKE.



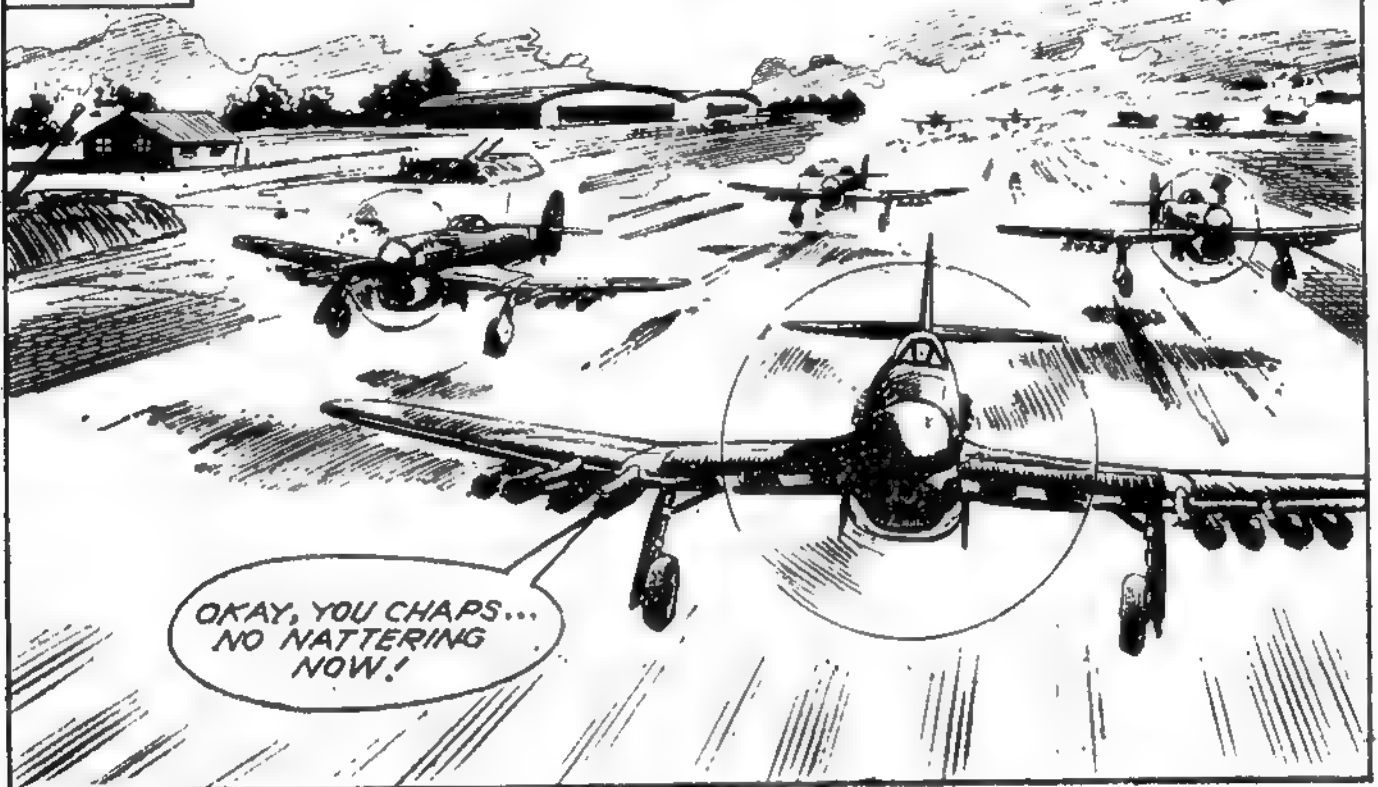
THE MISSION COMPLETED, TIMBER ORDERED HIS SQUADRON TO RETURN TO BASE. BUT ONLY TEN PLANES STREAKED AWAY FROM THE ENEMY-HELD COAST. TWO WOULD NEVER RETURN!



ONE BY ONE THE TYPHOONS LANDED AT BASE, WHERE THE PILOTS REPORTED AND GROUND CREWS QUICKLY RE-ARMED AND RE-FUELLED THE AIRCRAFT FOR THEIR NEXT SORTIE...



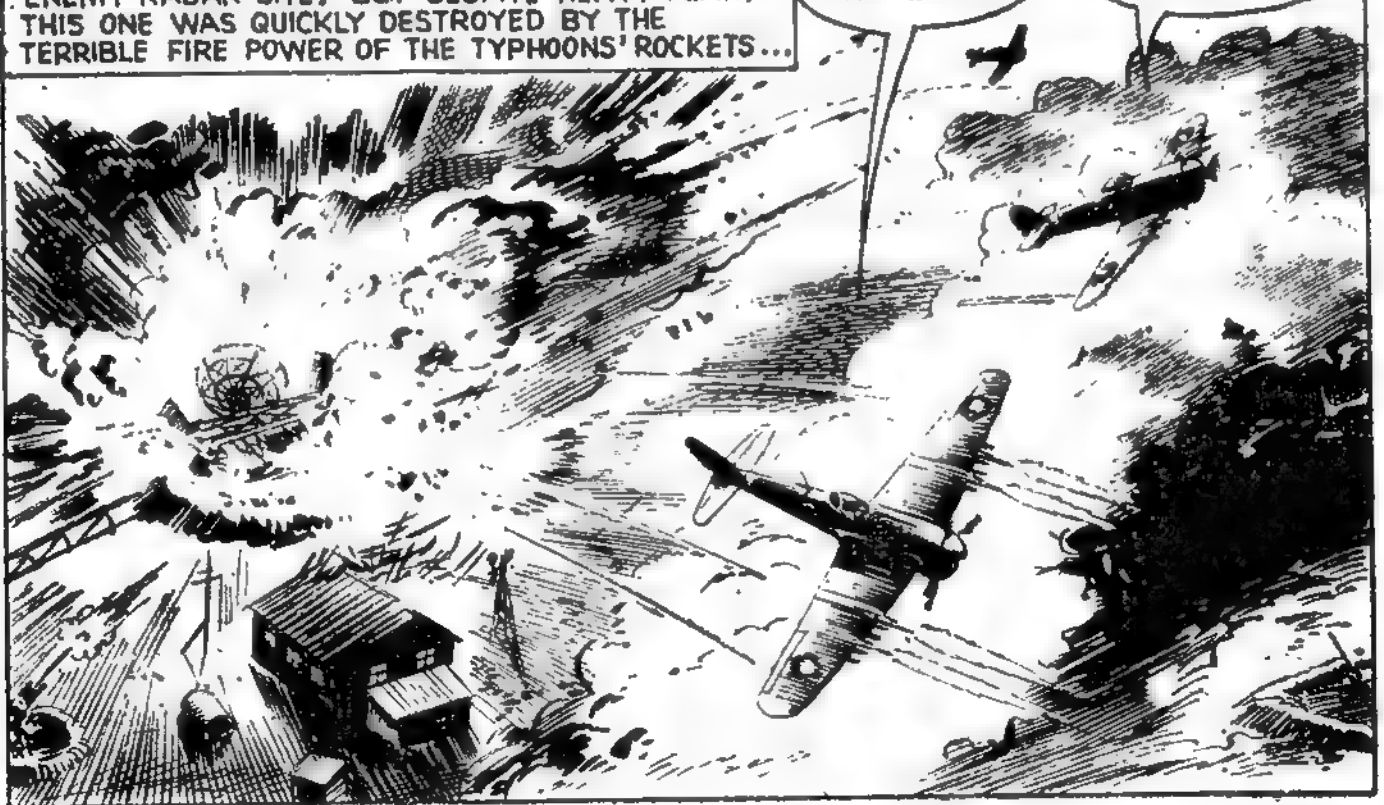
ONCE AGAIN TIMBER'S SQUADRON ROARED UP FROM THE AIRSTRIP, BOUND FOR THE FRENCH COAST AND THEIR NEXT RADAR TARGET...



TIMBER, FEELING THE STRAIN OF THE DAY'S ACTION, WAS GLAD OF THE SQUADRONS HUMOUR WHEN THEY BROKE SILENCE AND ATTACKED THE SECOND ENEMY RADAR SITE. BUT DESPITE HEAVY FLAK, THIS ONE WAS QUICKLY DESTROYED BY THE TERRIBLE FIRE POWER OF THE TYPHOONS' ROCKETS...

SLAM!
BANG! WHAT
A HEADACHE
FOR JERRY!

OH BOY...
LOOK AT THAT
SCREEN FOLDING
UP!

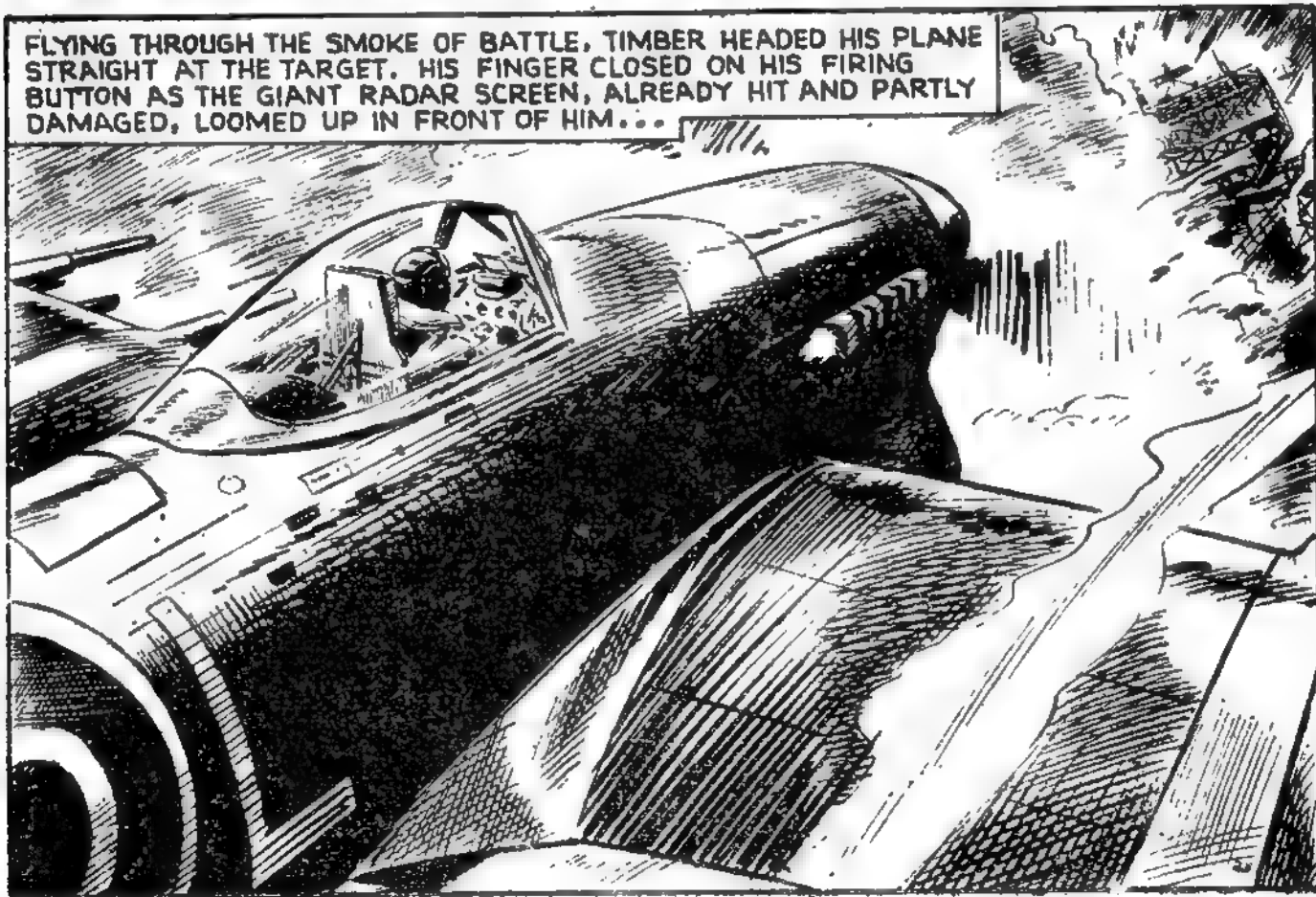


BUT LATER, WHEN THE SQUADRON MADE THEIR RUN-IN ON THEIR THIRD TARGET FURTHER ALONG THE COAST, THE GERMANS WERE WAITING WITH EVERY ACK-ACK GUN THEY COULD MUSTER, AND OPENED FIRE AT FIRST SIGHT OF THE ATTACKING PLANES. IT WAS THE WORST BARRAGE THE R.A.F. MEN HAD EVER ENCOUNTERED!



LUMME ... SOMEBODY TOLD 'EM WE WERE COMING! WHAT A RECEPTION!

FLYING THROUGH THE SMOKE OF BATTLE, TIMBER HEADED HIS PLANE STRAIGHT AT THE TARGET. HIS FINGER CLOSED ON HIS FIRING BUTTON AS THE GIANT RADAR SCREEN, ALREADY HIT AND PARTLY DAMAGED, LOOMED UP IN FRONT OF HIM...



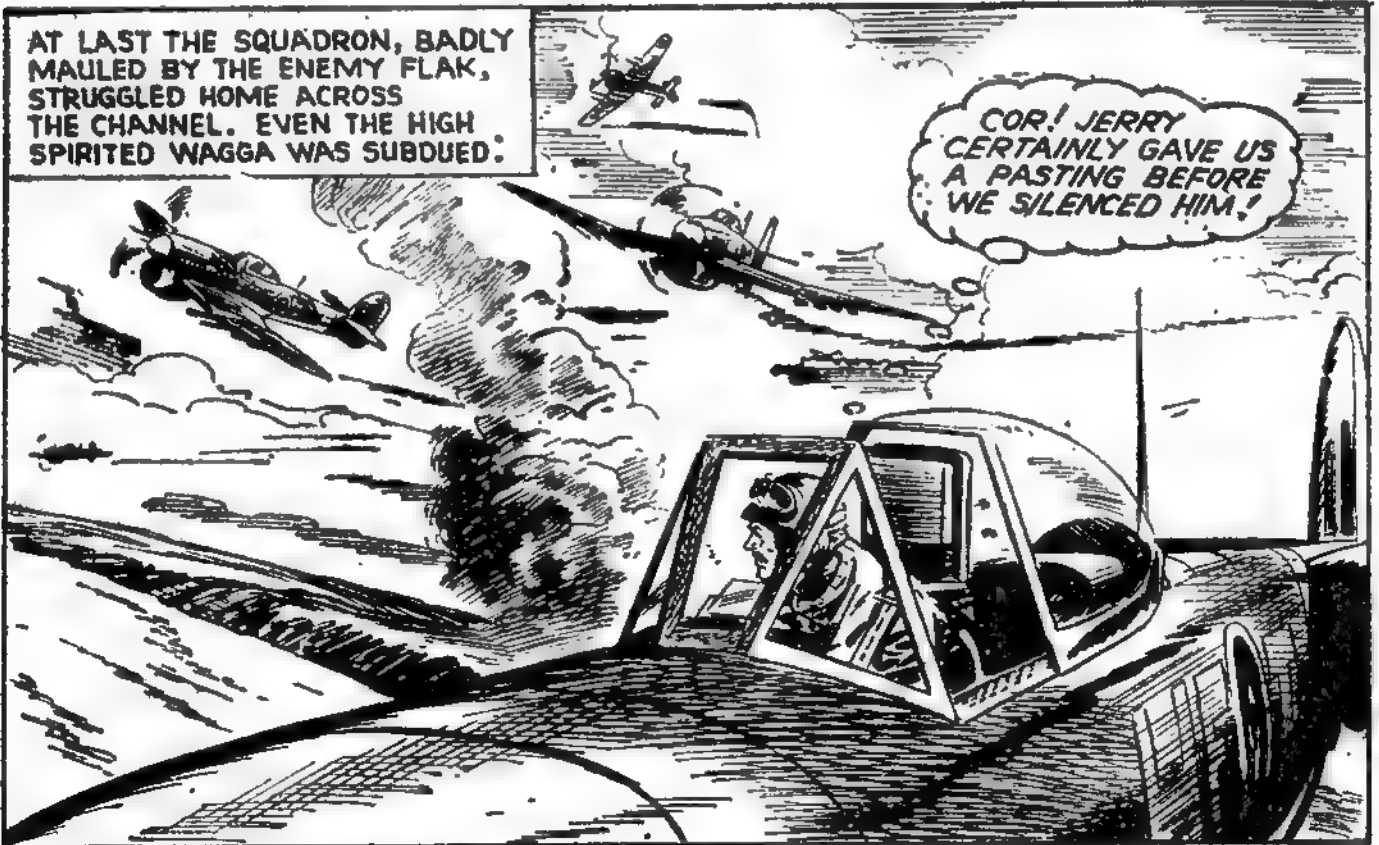
TIMBER GRITTED HIS TEETH... IT WAS THE MOMENT TO FIRE... AND THE TYPHOON'S EIGHT ROCKETS WERE PROJECTED EARTHWARDS TO STRIKE AND DESTROY!



TIMBER'S ROCKETS BLASTED THE RADAR SCREEN, AND THE NEXT MOMENT, AS OTHER TYPHOONS DEALT THEIR DEATH BLOWS, THERE WAS A TERRIFIC BLAST AS THE ENEMY'S AMMUNITION DUMP EXPLODED. HUGE COLUMNS OF SMOKE ROSE INTO THE AIR, MARKING THE SPOT OF YET ANOTHER R.A.F. ATTACK.



AT LAST THE SQUADRON, BADLY MAULLED BY THE ENEMY FLAK, STRUGGLED HOME ACROSS THE CHANNEL. EVEN THE HIGH SPIRITED WAGGA WAS SUBDUED.



TIRED AND EXHAUSTED THE PILOTS MADE RAGGED LANDINGS, SOME NEARLY OVER-RUNNING THE RUNWAY. TIMBER GROANED WITH RELIEF AS HE EASED HIMSELF OUT OF HIS COCKPIT.



THE SQUADRON HAD WELL-EARNED A REST, BUT AS THEY REFRESHED THEMSELVES WITH TEA IN THE MESS, THE COMMANDING OFFICER CAME IN LOOKING WORRIED...

RECCE PLANES HAVE BEEN OUT TO CHECK THE DAY'S WORK. THEY'VE DISCOVERED THAT YOUR LAST RADAR TARGET WAS NOT TOTALLY DESTROYED. ONE SCREEN DEMOLISHED, BUT ANOTHER IS DAMAGED AND STILL STANDING!

OH, MY HAT!



IT MEANS THAT TWO OF YOUR SQUADRON, WOODMAN, WILL HAVE TO FLY OUT IMMEDIATELY AND FINISH THE JOB. THE INVASION BOMBER FORCE IS READY. NOT ONE RADAR SCREEN MUST BE ALIVE TO HEAR IT COMING!



TIMBER LOOKED AT WAGGA AND IN THAT MOMENT ALL ANIMOSITY WAS SET ASIDE IN THE SUPREME EFFORT NOW REQUIRED OF THEM.

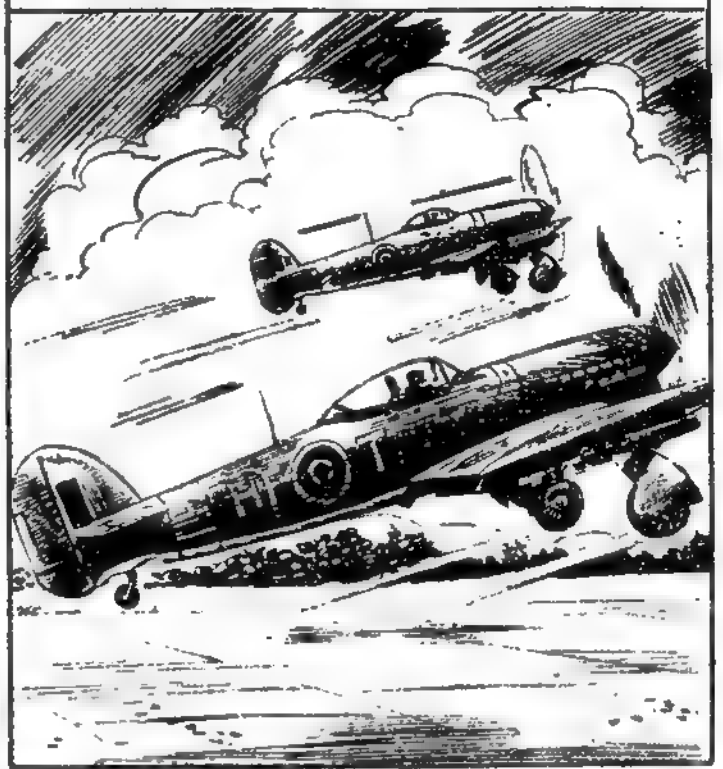
I'LL GO, SIR!

SO WILL I!

GOOD! TWO OF YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO IT. THE REST OF YOUR SQUADRON CAN REST UP, READY FOR THE D-DAY TASKS!



RE-ARMED AND RE-FUELLED, THE TWO TYPHOONS ROARED UP FROM THE AIRSTRIP... FOR TIMBER, THE COMING ATTACK WAS TO BE THE SUPREME TEST OF HIS COURAGE.



SIDE BY SIDE THEY STREAKED LOW OVER THE CHANNEL TOWARDS THEIR TARGET, STILL OBSTINATELY DEFENDED BY ACK-ACK GUNS ...

YOU SHOOT UP THE RADAR SCREEN, WAGGA... I'LL DRAW OFF THE JERRY GUNS!

JAKE!

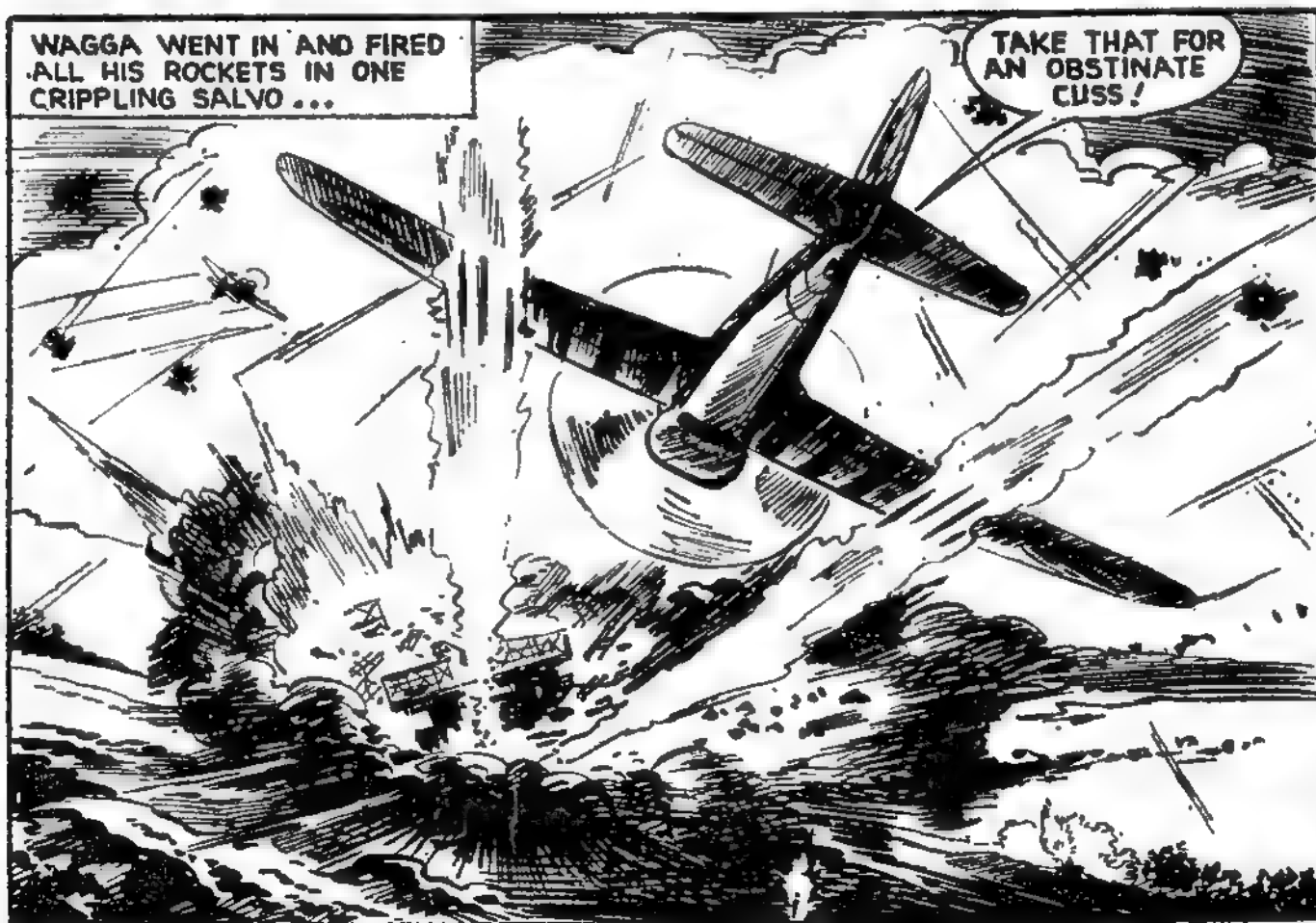


TIMBER SPRAYED RIBBONS OF
MOLTEN FIRE INTO A
GERMAN GUN POSITION ...



WAGGA WENT IN AND FIRED
ALL HIS ROCKETS IN ONE
CRIPPLING SALVO ...

TAKE THAT FOR
AN OBSTINATE
CUSS!



Chapter 5. TARGET IN A TUNNEL

CIRCLING THE TARGET AREA, TIMBER AND WAGGA BOTH YELLED IN TRIUMPH AS THEY SAW THAT THE RADAR POST WAS NOW COMPLETELY DESTROYED. TIMBER, WHOSE FEAR OF GUNFIRE WAS NOW A THING OF THE PAST, FELT ELATED.

HEY, WAGGA... I'VE STILL GOT MY ROCKETS
LET'S LOOK FOR SOMETHING ELSE TO BASH!

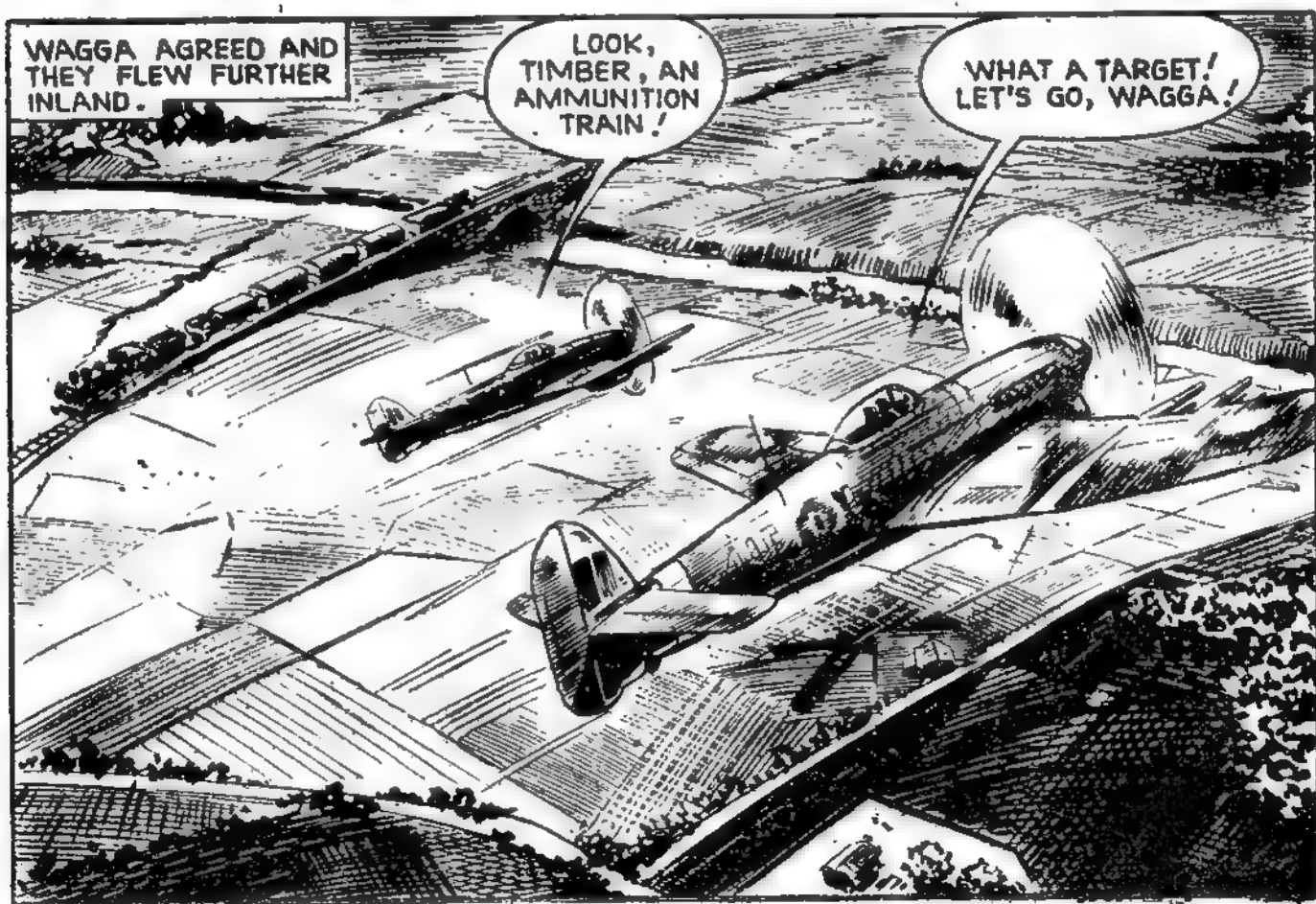
WHACK-O! THAT'S CLOBBERED IT...
GOOD. AND PROPER!



WAGGA AGREED AND THEY FLEW FURTHER INLAND.

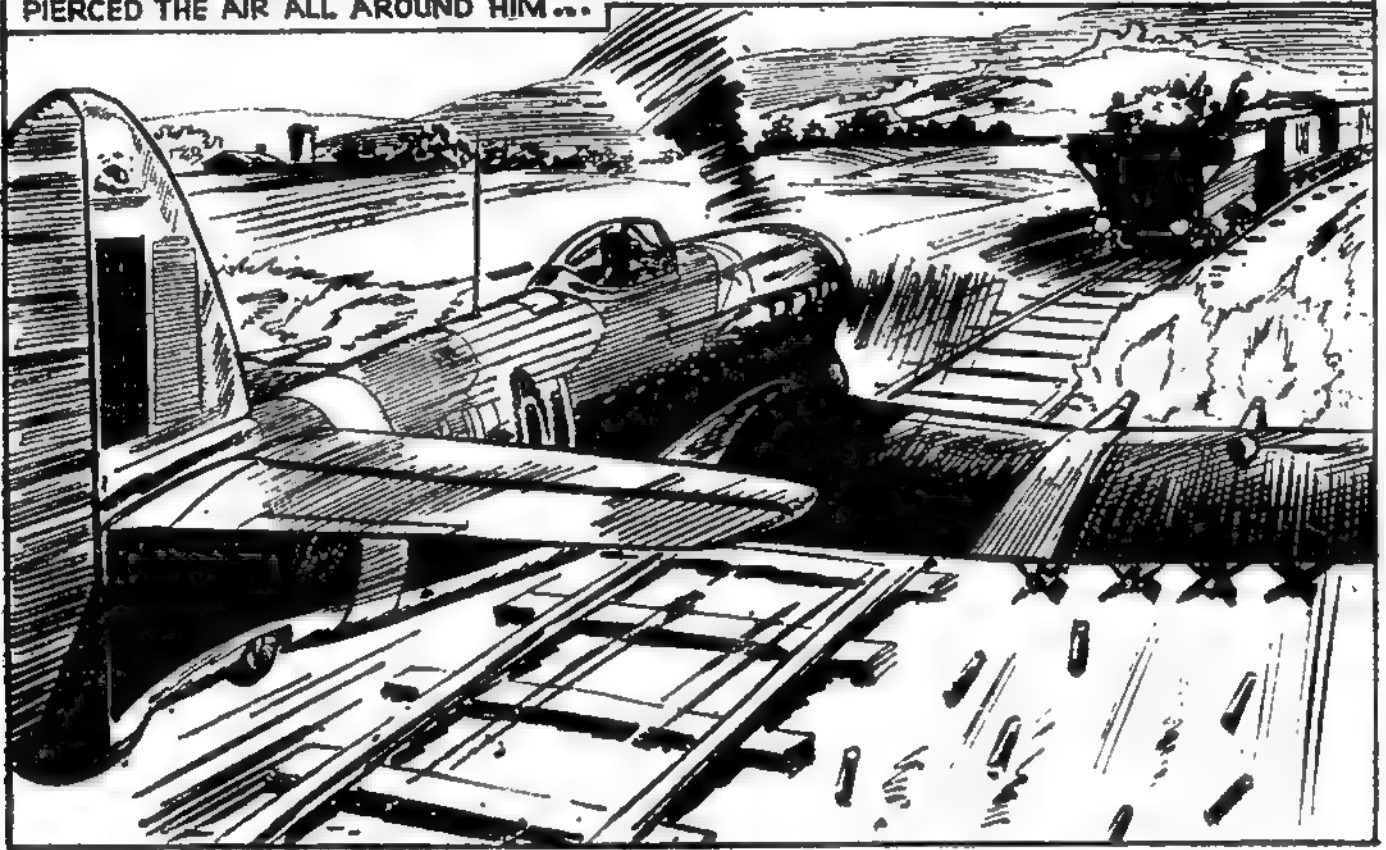
LOOK, TIMBER, AN AMMUNITION TRAIN!

WHAT A TARGET! LET'S GO, WAGGA!

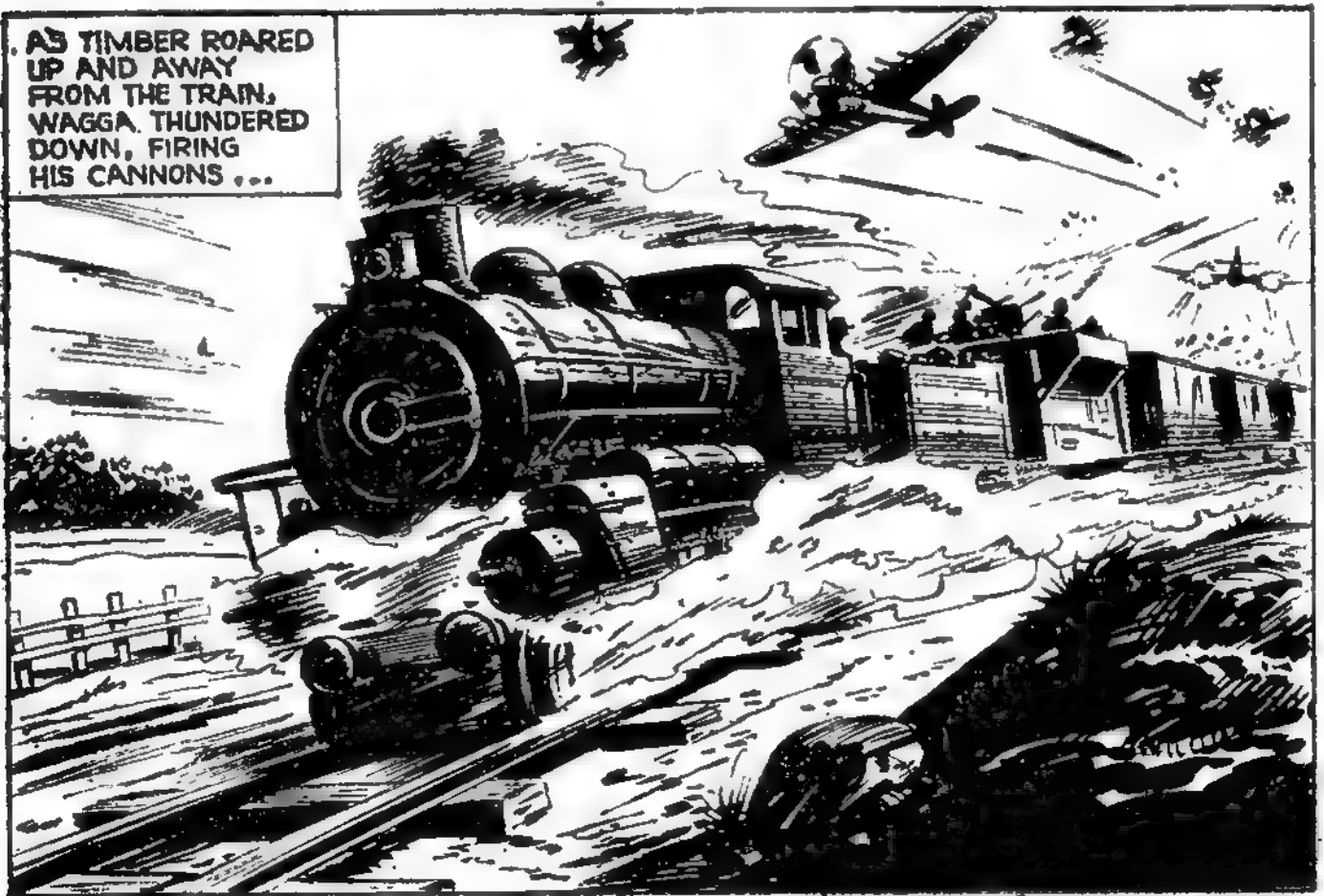


Rocket Typhoons

SWOOPING DOWN LIKE TWO GIANT BIRDS OF PREY, THE TYPHOONS STREAKED UP BEHIND THE AMMUNITION TRAIN. TIMBER FIRED A LONG BURST AT THE GUN-CREW, AS SHELLS PIERCED THE AIR ALL AROUND HIM...



AS TIMBER ROARED UP AND AWAY FROM THE TRAIN, WAGGA THUNDERED DOWN, FIRING HIS CANNONS...



SUDDENLY A TUNNEL LOOMED AHEAD AND WAGGA SCREECHED INTO A CLIMB...

LOOK OUT, WAGGA... TUNNEL!



THE TRAIN DISAPPEARED INTO THE TUNNEL AND STOPPED, TO SHELTER FROM THE FURY OF THE TYPHOONS WHICH TWISTED AND TURNED LIKE TWO TERRIERS WAITING TO POUNCE ON A RAT TRAPPED IN A DRAINPIPE.

IT'S STOPPED, TIMBER! HOW DO WE GET IT NOW?

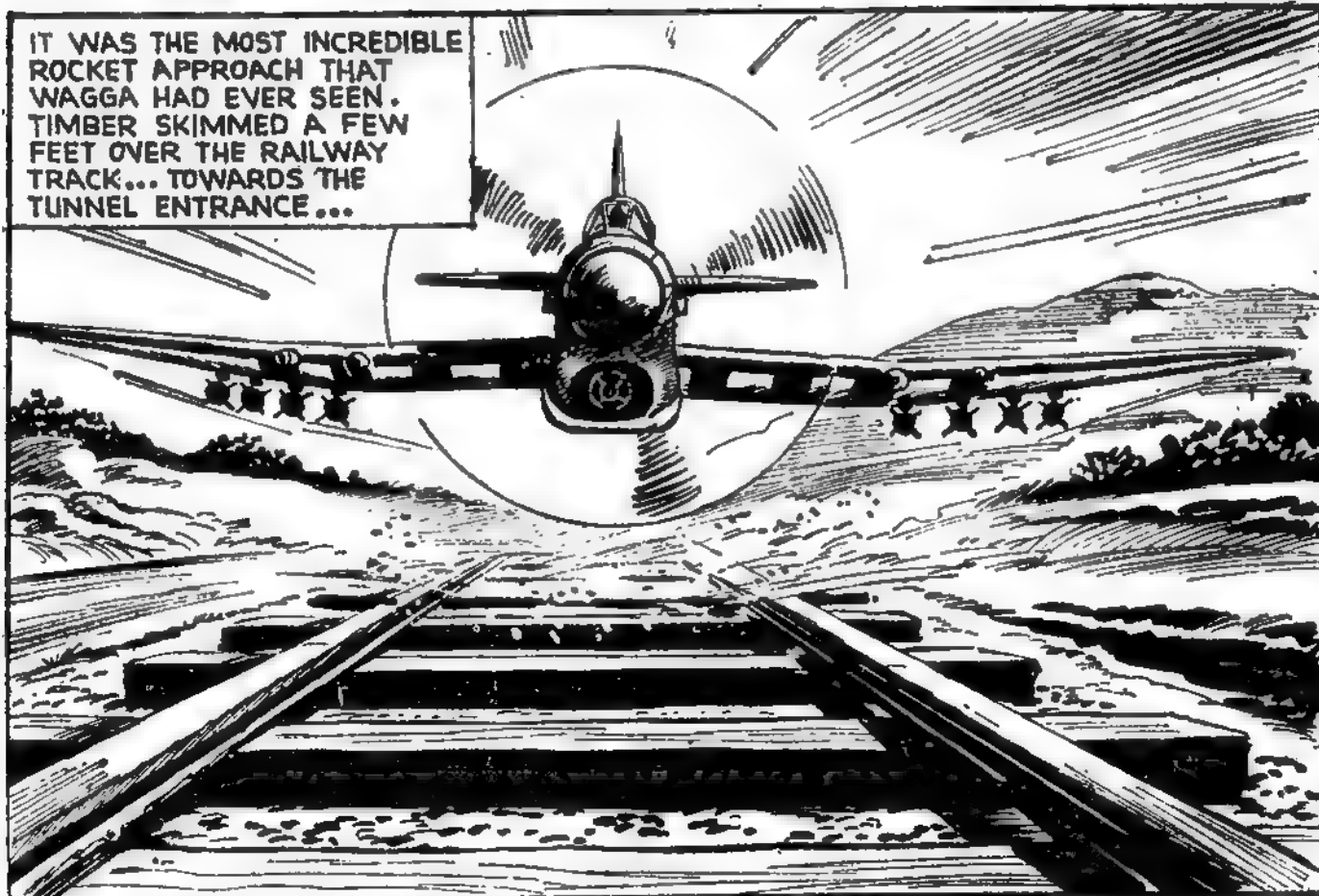
STRIKE AT THE TUNNEL... MY ROCKETS WILL DO THE TRICK!



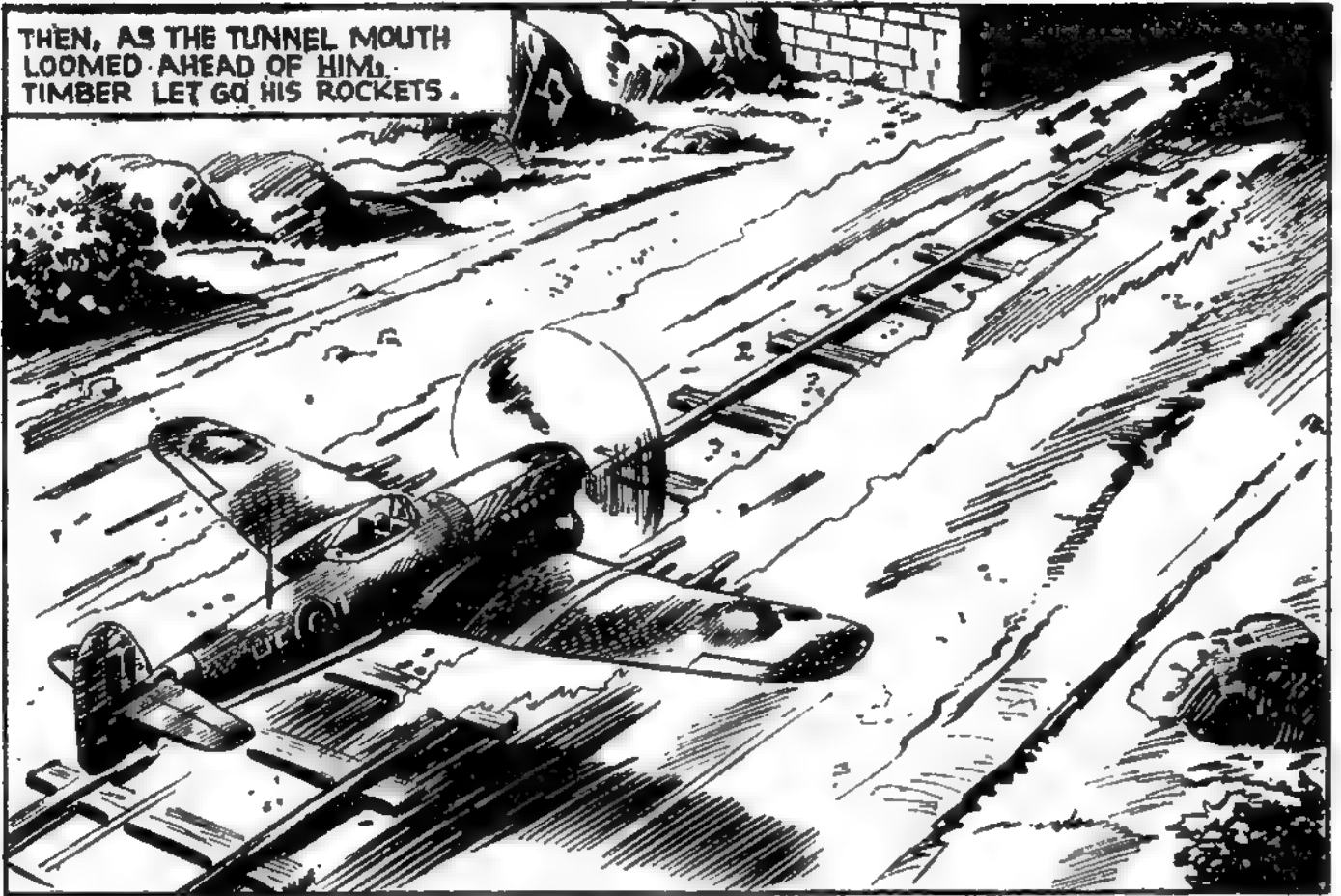
AS WAGGA WATCHED,
TIMBER BEGAN A SUICIDE
RUN AT THE TUNNEL...



IT WAS THE MOST INCREDIBLE
ROCKET APPROACH THAT
WAGGA HAD EVER SEEN.
TIMBER SKIMMED A FEW
FEET OVER THE RAILWAY
TRACK... TOWARDS THE
TUNNEL ENTRANCE...



THEN, AS THE TUNNEL MOUTH
LOOMED AHEAD OF HIM,
TIMBER LET GO HIS ROCKETS.



TIMBER WRENCHED HIS
PLANE INTO A VERTICAL
CLIMB... AS HIS
FLAMING ROCKETS
SCREAMED INTO THE
DARKNESS CONCEALING
THE AMMUNITION
TRAIN.



THE GERMAN GUN-
CREW STARED IN
HORROR AS THE
ROCKETS SPED
TOWARDS THEM...



THE ROCKETS SLAMMED
INTO THE TRAIN WHICH
WAS CARRYING HIGH
EXPLOSIVE SHELLS . . .

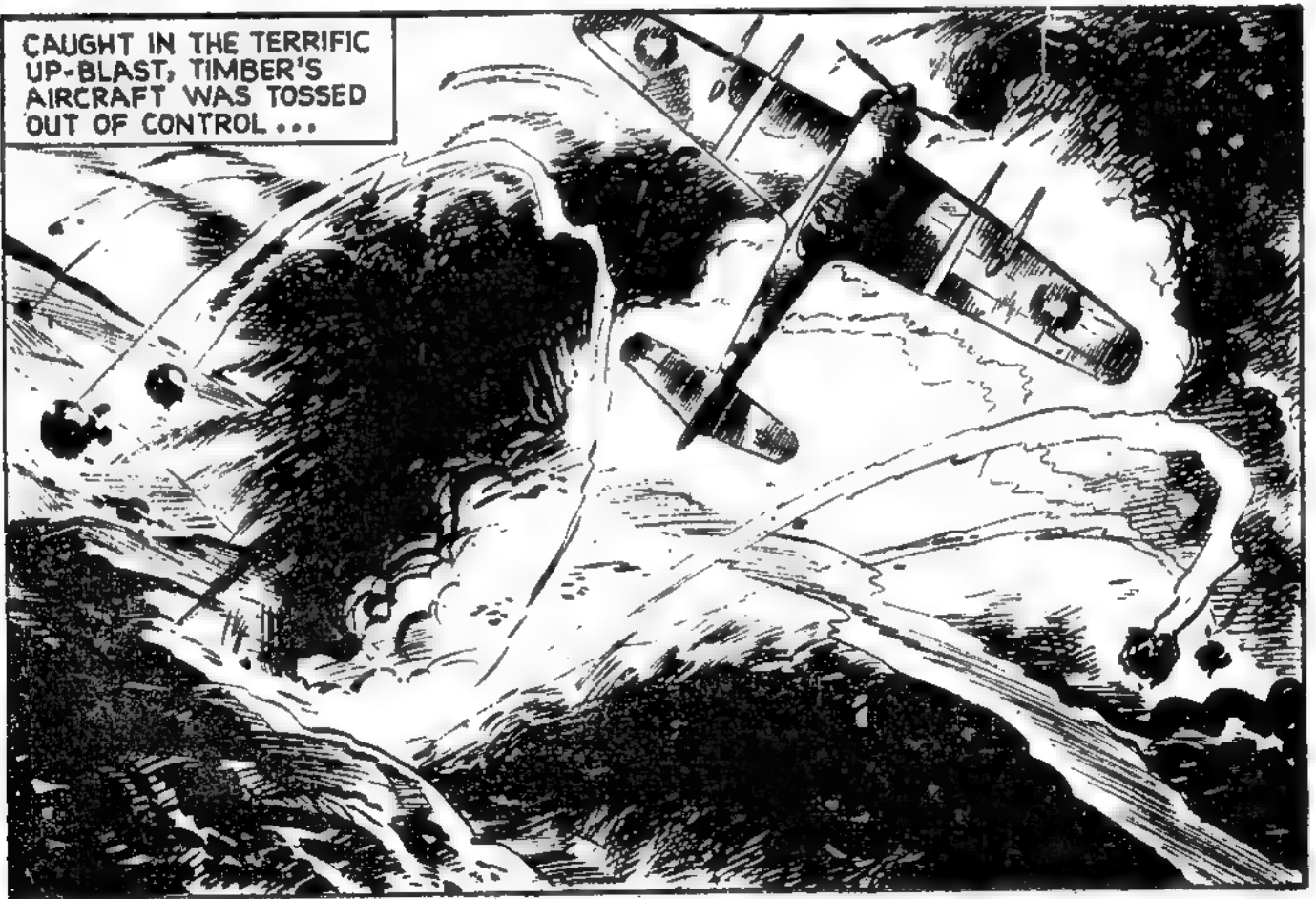


THE NEXT SECOND THE
TUNNEL SPLIT APART AND A
GREAT FOUNTAIN OF EARTH
SHOT INTO THE AIR ...

LOOK OUT,
TIMBER!



CAUGHT IN THE TERRIFIC
UP-BLAST, TIMBER'S
AIRCRAFT WAS TOSSED
OUT OF CONTROL ...



TIMBER WRENCHED AT THE CONTROLS AS HIS PLANE PLUNGED EARTHWARDS...

CONTROLS GONE...
SHE WON'T PULL
UP...

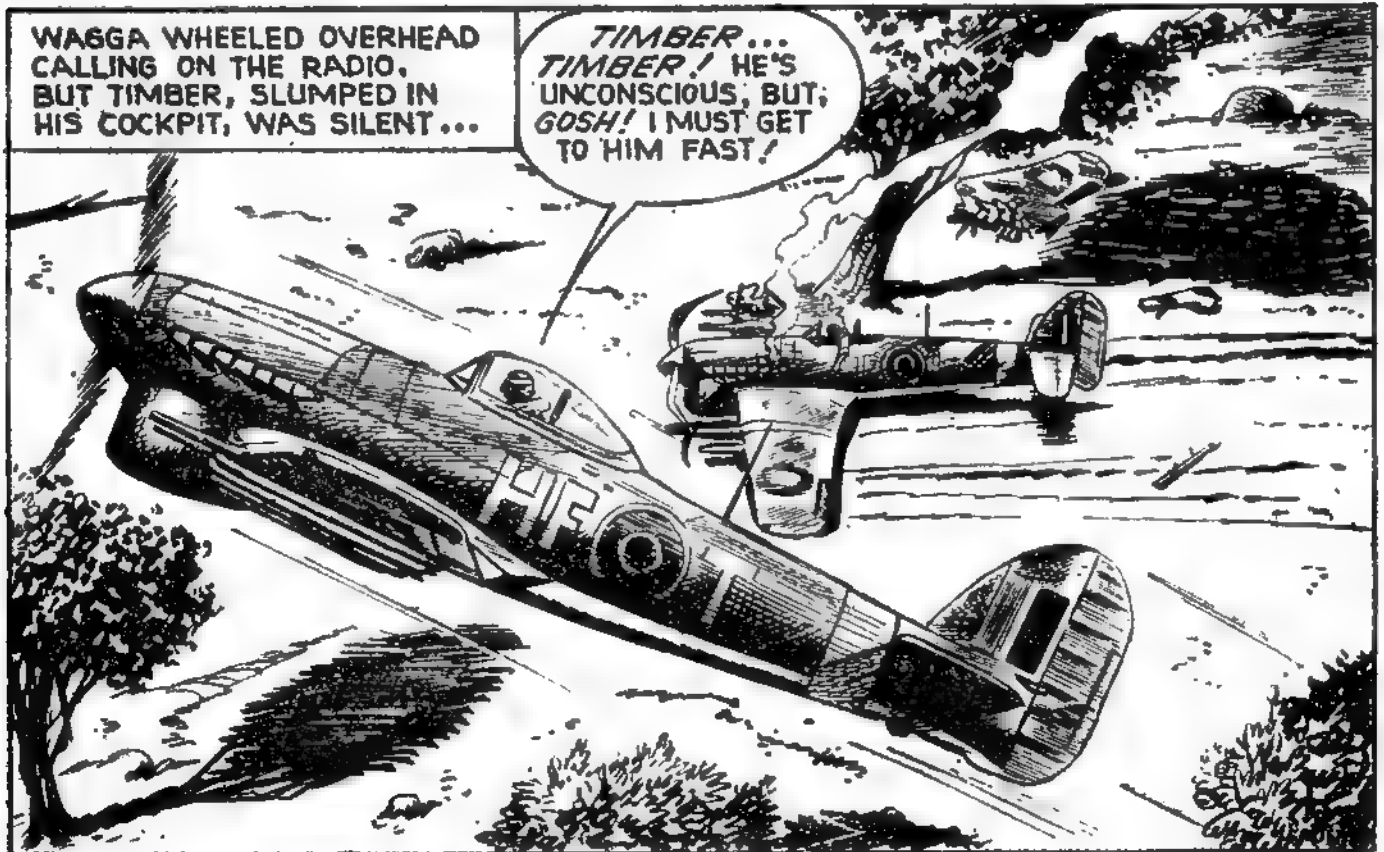


THE NEXT SECOND THE TYPHOON WAS SCRAPING THE GROUND AND ITS WING WAS SHEERED OFF BY A TREE...



WAGGA WHEELED OVERHEAD CALLING ON THE RADIO. BUT TIMBER, SLUMPED IN HIS COCKPIT, WAS SILENT...

TIMBER...
TIMBER! HE'S
UNCONSCIOUS, BUT;
GOSH! I MUST GET
TO HIM FAST!



WAGGA SUDDENLY REMEMBERED SOMETHING AND SHOT A FRANTIC GLANCE AT HIS WATCH...

GREAT GODFREY... THE INVASION! BOMBING IS DUE TO START ANY MOMENT NOW!



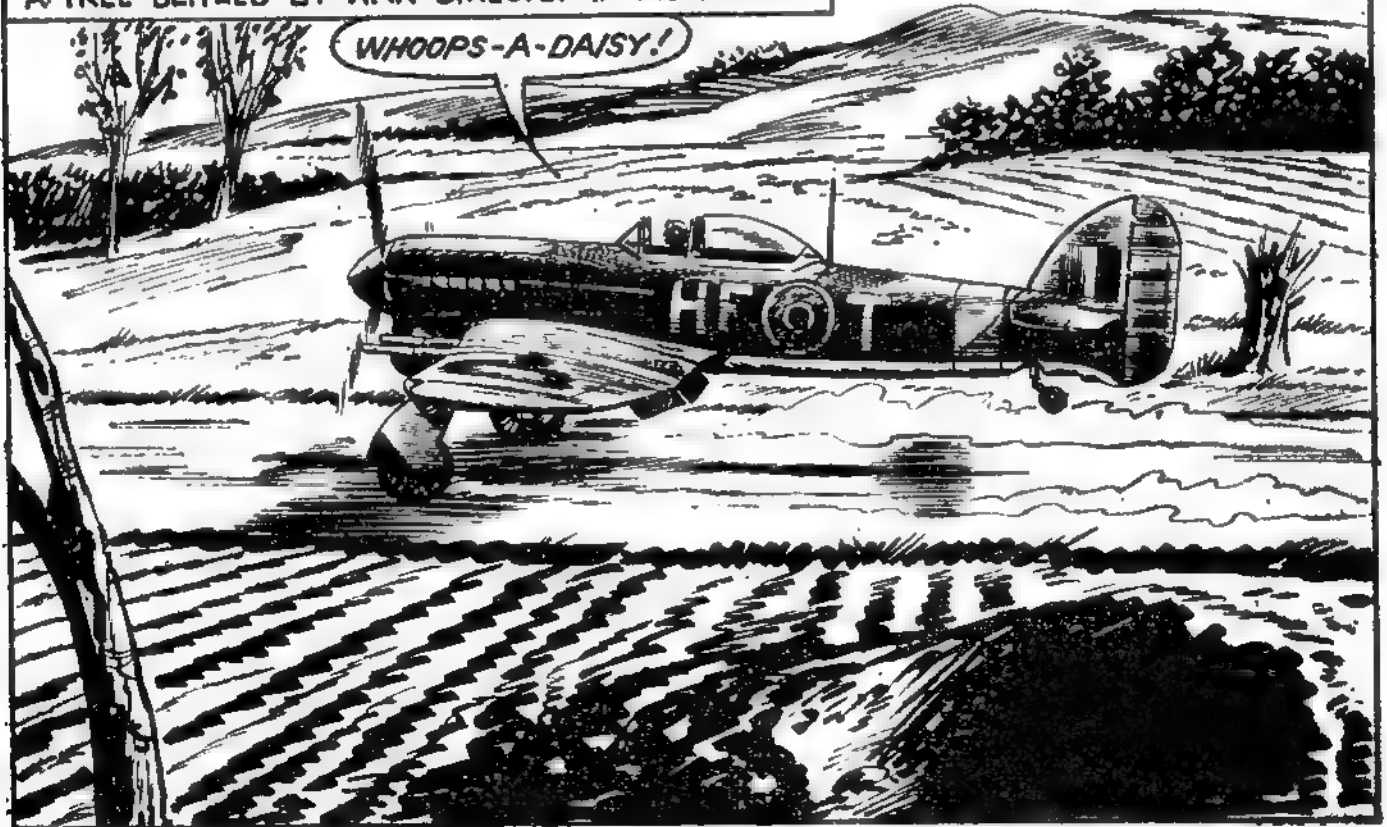
WAGGA CIRCLED AND FLEW LOW OVER THE CRASHED TYPHOON... LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO LAND...

THERE'S ONE THING CERTAIN... I AIN'T CLEARING OUT WITHOUT YOU, TIMBER... SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET DOWN ON THAT ROAD... HERE GOES!



WAGGA'S WHEELS TOUCHED THE ROADWAY AND HE BRAKED HARD AS HE SAW A TREE BLITZED BY WAR DIRECTLY IN HIS PATH...

WHOOOPS-A-DAISY!



THE PLANE SCREECHED TO A HALT, AND LEAPING FROM HIS COCKPIT WAGGA-RAN IN SEARCH OF TIMBER'S WRECKED TYPHOON...



SOON THE SKY WOULD BE FULL OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN BOMBERS COMING TO BOMB THE INVASION AREA. THE MINUTES BEGAN TO RUN OUT. SUDDENLY WAGGA STOPPED AND LISTENED.



IT WAS DUSK, JUNE THE 5TH, THE EVE OF INVASION DAY, AND HE AND TIMBER WERE IN THE TARGET AREA. THEN WAGGA SIGHTED TIMBER'S PLANE...





WITH THE SINISTER RUMBLE OF BOMBERS GROWING EVER LOUDER, WAGGA STRUGGLED ON WITH HIS CRIPPLED COMPANION...

I WON'T FORGET THIS, WAGGA. YOU COULD HAVE LEFT ME!

NOT LIKELY! AND BY THE WAY, YOU SHOT UP THAT TRAIN FAIR DINKUM!



SUDDENLY DEATH CAME WHISTLING DOWN FROM THE DARKENING SKY... BOMBS CRASHED INTO THE ENEMY LINES... THE RAILWAY TRACKS... AND ROADWAYS...



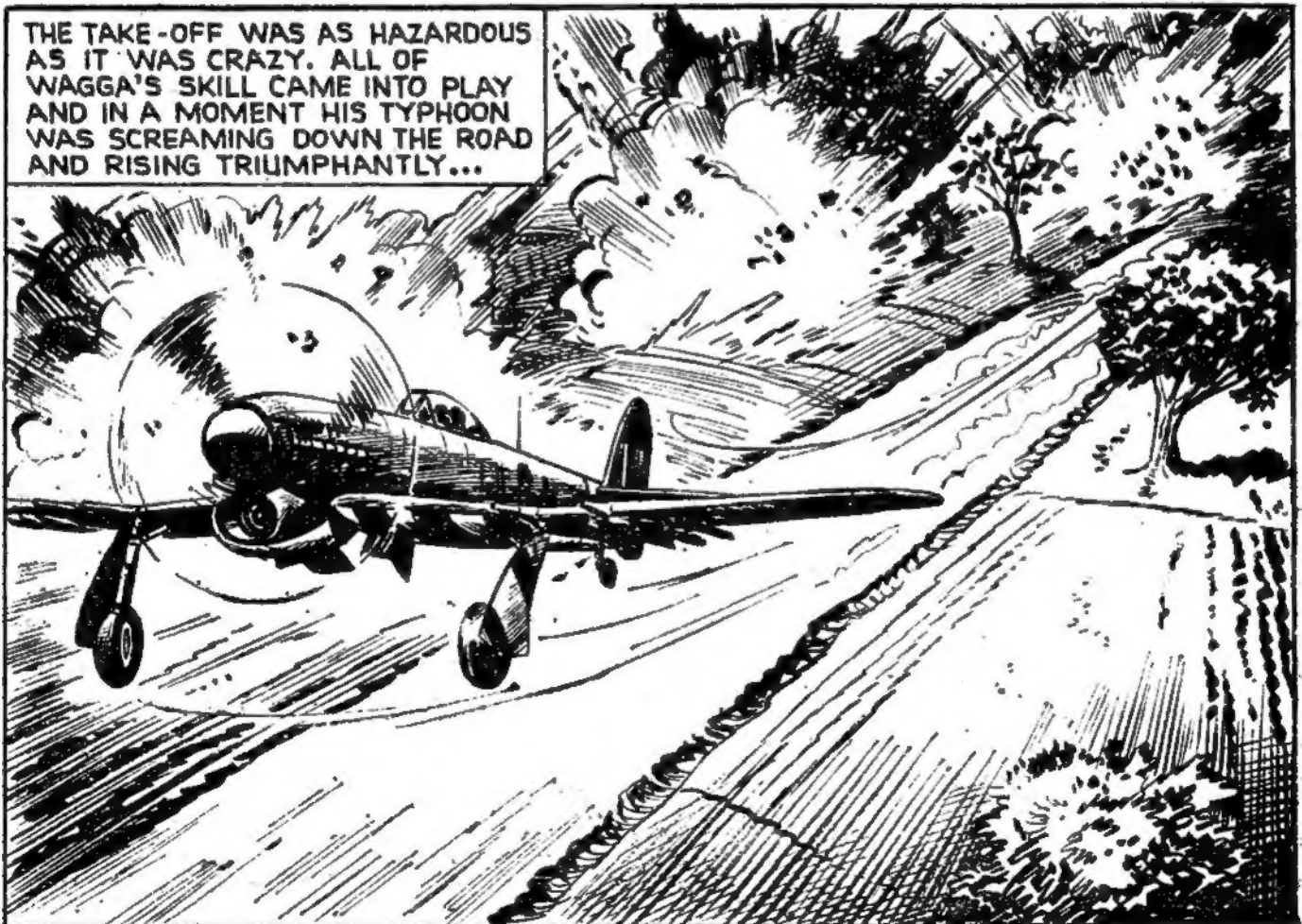
WE MIGHT JUST MAKE IT, WAGGA!

THEN THE OVERPOWERING ROAR OF THE HEAVY BOMBERS WAS UPON THEM... BOMBS BURST ALL AROUND THE TYPHOON...

IT'S GOING TO BE A SQUEEZE IN THE COCKPIT... UP YOU COME!



THE TAKE-OFF WAS AS HAZARDOUS AS IT WAS CRAZY. ALL OF WAGGA'S SKILL CAME INTO PLAY AND IN A MOMENT HIS TYPHOON WAS SCREAMING DOWN THE ROAD AND RISING TRIUMPHANTLY...



REACHING A SAFE HEIGHT THEY WERE ABLE TO TURN FOR HOME AND LOOK DOWN ON THE INFERNO BELOW... THE MOST SPECTACULAR CURTAIN RAISER IN ALL HISTORY! IN A FEW HOURS THE GRAND LIBERATION OF EUROPE WOULD BEGIN!



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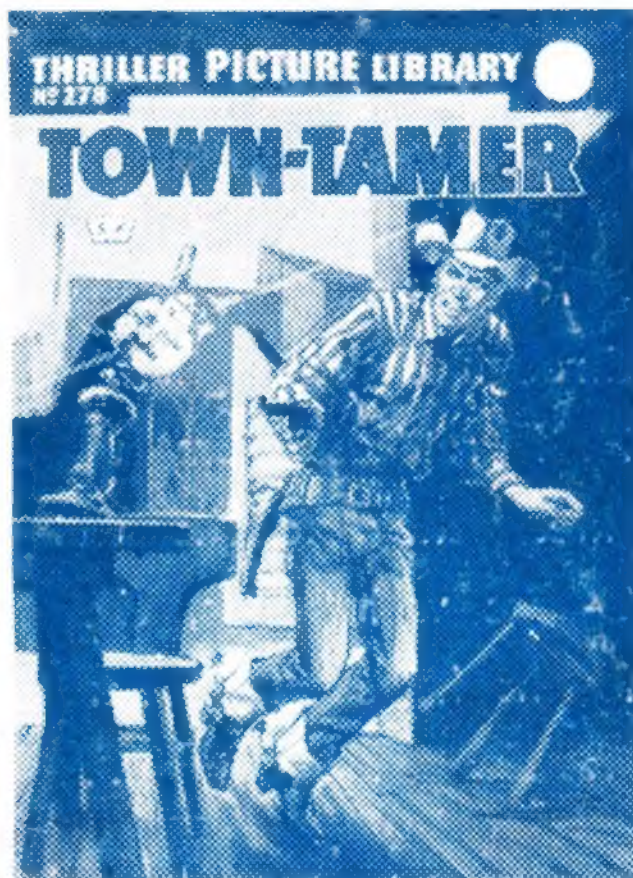
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